

Fukushima-is-still-news

- vol. 14 –

Nuclear Weapons



Odile Girard



Référence bibliographique

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INTRODUCTION

J'ai « découvert » l'écologie au début des années 70, croisant dans le même temps la pollution, les luttes paysannes et la malbouffe, la médecine qui avait (déjà) perdu son âme, les mouvements sociaux et bien sûr le nucléaire qui a occupé une grande partie de ma vie.

Après la catastrophe de mars 2011 au Japon, j'ai suivi chaque jour une partie des grands journaux japonais anglophones pour essayer de sauvegarder un maximum d'articles ayant trait à Fukushima. L'idée était de conserver une sorte d'archive accessible à tous, qu'ils soient écrivains, journalistes ou tout simplement intéressés.

Le blog « [Fukushima-is-still-news](http://fukushima-is-still-news.com) » a été poursuivi jusqu'en 2019. Ci-dessous, la conclusion parue le jour où j'ai décidé d'arrêter mon blog.

End of March 2019: Time to stop this blog

29 Mars 2019

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I have been collecting and spreading information on the Fukushima disaster for more than 8 years.

More than ever I am convinced that the name of my blog « Fukushima-is-still-news » was aptly chosen. Or perhaps i should have called it « Fukushima should still be news ». What i'm getting at is that i know the disaster is going on and we cannot simply forget Fukushima and turn the page. But the mode of action I chose 8 years ago has its limits and it is time for me to stop this blog.

I don't want the contents to be lost, so I will try and publish the lot with the Éditions de Fukushima so that the information remains available online.

Good bye for now. I am not doing a disappearing act. I'm still there tracking what's going on in the world of nukes.

C'est maintenant chose faite. Le blog *fukushima-is-still-news* est désormais disponible aux Éditions de Fukushima. Une fois de plus merci à mon ami Pierre, qui m'a convaincue à l'époque de tenir ce blog et m'a aidée à le lancer.

Odile Girard

Avertissement

La mise en page de dizaines de milliers de pages étant trop fastidieuse, nous avons préféré dans un premier temps éditer les volumes 7 à 16 sans mise en page particulière plutôt que de risquer de ne jamais les éditer. Chacun de ces livres est donc, dans la version présente, constitué des articles du blog copiés de manière brute. Les articles sont disposés a priori chronologiquement. Nous nous excusons donc pour l'absence de table des matières. La recherche peut toutefois facilement être effectuée par mot clé avec la fonction CTRL + F

Le présent volume est le quatorzième d'une collection de 16 ouvrages :

Vol. 1 : Daiichi Nuclear Plant (2012-2014)

Vol. 2 : Daiichi Nuclear Plant (2015-2019)

**Vol. 3 : Radioactive Fallout And Waste,
No.4 Fuel Removal,
Nuclear Workers,
and UN Conference**

Vol. 4 : Nuke Safety (2012-2015)

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**Vol. 6 : Reprocessing,
Storage Nuclear Waste,
and Decommissioning**

**Vol. 7 : Practical Problems For The Japanese Population
2012-2014**

**Vol. 8 : Practical Problems For The Japanese Population
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**Vol. 9 : Practical Problems For The Japanese Population
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Japan's management of plutonium

March 26, 2014

Abe defends Japan's management of weapons-grade plutonium

<http://mainichi.jp/english/english/newsselect/news/20140326p2g00m0dm055000c.html>

THE HAGUE (Kyodo) -- Prime Minister Shinzo Abe on Tuesday defended Japan's management of nuclear materials including weapons-grade plutonium, dismissing concern that a massive amount of nuclear substances could be used for non-civilian purposes.

"The International Atomic Energy Agency has concluded that all the plutonium in Japan is for peaceful purposes under its safeguards," Abe told a press conference on the final day of the Nuclear Security Summit in The Hague.

"We voluntarily have disclosed information about our management of plutonium and the information is more detailed than advised in international guidelines," he said.

In responding to a question on why Japan retains as much as 9 tons of plutonium, Abe said, "We made it very clear this time that **we will stick to the principle of having no plutonium that does not have a specified use.**"

According to the governmental Japan Atomic Energy Commission, Japan retains 9 tons of plutonium in domestic facilities and 35 tons of plutonium in Britain and France.

During the summit in the Dutch city, Japan and the United States announced an agreement in which Tokyo will return hundreds of kilograms of highly enriched uranium and weapons-grade plutonium that U.S. President Barack Obama said would be "enough for a dozen nuclear weapons."

The materials, provided by the United States for research during the Cold War era, are kept in a research facility in Tokaimura, northeast of Tokyo.

The Chinese Foreign Ministry said it "welcomes" Japan's agreement with the United States, describing it as the first step in the right direction.

Ministry spokesman Hong Lei, however, called for further action, saying, "**Japan still stockpiles other sensitive nuclear materials, which far exceed its actual normal needs.**" China earlier expressed concern that Japan's nuclear stockpile poses a proliferation risk as it could be used for weapons.

Japan reached the agreement with the United States as part of efforts to reduce global stockpiles of nuclear materials, a main theme of the biennial summit which was launched in 2010 at the initiative of Obama.

Obama described Japan's decision to reduce its stock of nuclear materials as "a major commitment" during a joint press conference with Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte to wrap up the summit.

Abe pointed to Japan's measures against possible nuclear terrorism such as round-the-clock police guard at atomic power plants and regular deployments of Coast Guard vessels in waters near nuclear plants, which are typically built near the coast.

March 26, 2014(Mainichi Japan)

1996 Nuke Judgement (1)

August 01, 2014

NUKE JUDGEMENT: Former ICJ president reveals 'nightmare' in 1996 landmark opinion on nuclear weapons

http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/politics/AJ201408010078

By FUMIHIKO YOSHIDA/ Editorial Writer

Editor's note: This is part of a four-part package of articles on the background of a landmark advisory opinion on nuclear weapons presented by the International Court of Justice in 1996.

A major turning point in the international movement to ban nuclear weapons because of their inhumane nature occurred in 1996, and it came down to the vote of one man, Mohammed Bedjaoui.

Bedjaoui, 84, of Algeria was president of an International Court of Justice panel that issued an advisory opinion stating that "the threat or use of nuclear weapons would generally be contrary to the rules of international law."

Although the article said nuclear weapons were "generally" a violation of international law, it included wording that the ICJ "cannot conclude definitively, whether the threat or use of nuclear weapons would be

lawful or unlawful in an extreme circumstance of self-defense, in which the very survival of a state would be at stake.”

In an interview with The Asahi Shimbun, Bedjaoui revealed the difficult behind-the-scenes discussions among the jurists before deciding on a key point of the opinion, which combined the two opposing elements.

The court was split seven to seven on whether nuclear weapons were illegal. Under voting rules, the casting vote of the president is used in the case of a tie.

Bedjaoui explained that two main pillars of humanitarian law were referred to in deciding that the use of nuclear weapons would constitute a violation of international law. One was the provision that weapons of any kind should not be used against civilians. The other was that soldiers should not suffer “unnecessary pain” from the weapons used against them.

But Bedjaoui also explained that international law provides the right to self-defense to all nations. That contradiction between the two major principles was behind the two-sided nature of what has been called point 2-E of the conclusions in the advisory opinion.

As a way of overcoming that contradiction, the advisory opinion pointed to Article 6 of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty and stated in point 2-F “there exists an obligation to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects.”

In explaining how that point was approved unanimously by the ICJ, Bedjaoui said there was a “double obligation” for NPT signatories under Article 6.

“It is not only necessary to negotiate in good faith, but also to reach total and permanent nuclear disarmament,” Bedjaoui said. “(The signatories) really have to negotiate to eliminate nuclear weapons. When those weapons are eliminated, there will not be any juridical contradictions left.”

He also explained his own internal turmoil concerning point 2-E since he favored stronger wording stating that nuclear weapons were in complete violation of international law.

“It was a nightmare,” Bedjaoui said. “I told myself I have to vote in favor of point E, not as Mohammed Bedjaoui, but as an international civil servant to the international community.”

He added that his true feelings on the issue were made clear in his appending declaration to the advisory opinion.

In that declaration, Bedjaoui wrote that “the Court’s inability to go beyond this statement of the situation can in no way be interpreted to mean that it is leaving the door ajar to recognition of the legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons.”

He further wrote that “the use of nuclear weapons by a State in circumstances in which its survival is at stake risks in its turn endangering the survival of all mankind, precisely because of the inextricable link between terror and escalation in the use of such weapons. It would thus be quite foolhardy unhesitatingly to set the survival of a State above all other considerations, in particular above the survival of mankind itself.”

Bedjaoui’s strong feelings against nuclear weapons led to the drafting of point 2-F, which went beyond Article 6 of the NPT, which only states that signatories “pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament, and on a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.”

Bedjaoui also revealed how the testimony before the ICJ by Hiroshima Mayor Takashi Hiraoka and Nagasaki Mayor Iccho Itoh influenced his own thinking about nuclear weapons.

“A judge of the ICJ is, after all, a human being who has political convictions,” Bedjaoui said. “In this eminently political matter, we have to express ourselves based not only on the law but also on our consciousness.”

NUKE JUDGEMENT/ Bedjaoui: 18 years later, ICJ opinion on eliminating nuclear weapons more important than ever

http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/politics/AJ201408010080

August 01, 2014

By FUMIHIKO YOSHIDA/ Editorial Writer

Editor’s note: This is part of a four-part package of articles on the background of a landmark advisory opinion on nuclear weapons presented by the International Court of Justice in 1996.

Question: How did the International Court of Justice (ICJ) reach its advisory opinion about the illegality of the use of nuclear weapons?

Mohammed Bedjaoui: It was not an easy task for the ICJ. For that advisory opinion, the court had its longest deliberation in its history. The court compiled a colossal body of work in order to know whether there is an international law, one specific rule, one particular norm, one special principle, which allows or forbids the use of nuclear weapons by any state in circumstances in which the own survival of this state would be at stake.

I have to tell you that the judges have studied in detail every rule, every point of international law. For example, the genocide question, because if a nuclear weapon eliminates an entire population, can't we talk about genocide? Or, the environment question, because a nuclear weapon destroys everything, nature and all. The judges studied the entire questions, from all points of view, with seriousness and meticulousness.

Q: Could you summarize the crucial arguments in the court?

A: The court has first recognized that the law during the war, and, particularly, humanitarian law, applies for every form of war and every type of weapon. This law is built on two important pillars. The first is the prohibition of the use of any weapon which would inflict damage on the population. The soldiers have to make the difference between the soldiers and the civilians. The soldiers should be targeted only; the civilians should be protected. The second pillar is about the soldiers. It is strictly forbidden to use a weapon which could inflict unnecessary pain on the soldiers.

The court has noticed that nuclear weapons inflict indiscriminate damage, and target not only the soldiers but also civilians. And even beyond, because nuclear weapons can impact neutral and neighboring countries. The use of nuclear weapons would then be a violation of humanitarian law.

But Article 51 of the U.N. Charter has defined the customary principle of self-defense, as an inherent and natural right, that every state has. This right of self-defense is intangible in all circumstances, and moreover when a state is at stake. Every state would have the right to use any weapon to avoid its own destruction.

Let us suppose a state has nuclear weapons, and it is allowed to defend against military attack. Then, this state has the right to use nuclear weapons? If this state is about to disappear, to collapse, if the population of this state is in the middle of a crisis and may disappear, too, does this state have the right to do anything in order to survive? On the contrary, this state has to respect the juridical duty, instead of using nuclear weapons? That's the question.

Q: And how did you reach the final conclusion?

A: If you consider these two pillars in international law, one which prohibits the use of nuclear weapons and the other which looks like allowing it on the contrary, we have some conflict here. The international

law put us in a conflictual situation. On one side, we have a respectable principle, but on the other side, we also have equally respectable principles.

The court has noted that there is this kind of tension between humanitarian law, which would prohibit the use of nuclear weapons because of their indiscriminate effect, and the right of self-defense which would be allowed, in some extreme cases, in order to let a state survive. These two points would be in contradiction, in some frontal conflict. Consequently, as a sort of compromise, we had concluded as Point E in the advisory opinion.

The wording of Point E is as follows:

The threat or use of nuclear weapons would generally be contrary to the rules of international law applicable in armed conflict, and, in particular, the principles and rules of humanitarian law.

However, in view of the current state of international law, and of the elements of facts at its disposal, the court cannot conclude definitively whether the threat or use of nuclear weapons would be lawful or unlawful in an extreme circumstance of self-defense, in which the very survival of a state would be at stake.

Q: The U.N. General Assembly did not request an ICJ advisory opinion about Article 6 of the NPT (Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty). Nevertheless, the advisory opinion emphasized the obligation in Article 6 on nuclear disarmament. Why did it?

A: As I described, there is tension between humanitarian law and the right of self-defense. Then, what are we supposed to do? The ICJ said that the only way to avoid this kind of situation, almost a Cornelian dilemma, a very difficult situation, is to remove nuclear weapons, the reason for the conflict. Therefore, let's see Article 6 of the NPT, and let's say we really have to negotiate, in order to conclude some treaty, to eliminate nuclear weapons. When those weapons are eliminated there will not be any conflict, any juridical contradiction, left.

The obligation defined in Article 6 of the NPT is, in fact, a double obligation. It is not only necessary to negotiate in good faith, but also to reach a precise result, which has been defined as total and permanent nuclear disarmament. That is what the ICJ said in Point F.

Therefore, the wording of Point F is written as follows:

There exists an obligation to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control.

Q: Was there a lot of discussion about Point F, or everyone agreed to it quickly?

A: We had discussions about every point. But Point F was quickly approved unanimously. Yes, quickly. It is after this unanimous vote that in the juridical circles, in the international circles, some voices have risen, saying that "the ICJ has gone too far," like Pakistan, India or Israel. We answered then that we did not go too far.

Q: In the NPT, it is written that states need to negotiate in good faith, but there is nothing clearly about the need of bringing some result.

A: The obligation of bringing results is an imperative one, because it is from customary law. In law, we're talking about "obligation of ways," and "obligation of results." The first means that the state has to use every means it can without guaranteeing any results. On the contrary, the second is something clearer, more radical. The state has to use any means and ways, but it has to reach some result. Those two obligations are well-known in international law. And they have already existed.

Q: I presume that Point F is very important and a new attempt.

A: That's something the ICJ can be proud of itself, having been able to reach that unanimous vote, at such a high level of responsibility. The court has interpreted Article 6 as conditioning a strict behavior which should lead to an obligation of results.

This obligation of results, that is to say reaching to a complete and permanent nuclear disarmament, is an imperious obligation. We can do nothing but agree to the urgent need for nuclear weapon states to intensify their negotiations in efforts for nuclear disarmament. The fact of concluding the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty has been considered as a real token of good faith in that matter. We have to be glad about it, but we have also to consider it like a necessary step toward nuclear disarmament. We should not forget that the conclusion of this treaty is still an insufficient measure, if that's not followed by another treaty to denuclearize nuclear weapon states with a certain schedule.

Let me say a few words about the NPT, which was signed in 1968. That is, first of all, an unequal treaty which does not set every state on an equal footing, even if every state is equally sovereign. This treaty imposed on states to give up their right to legitimate defense by nuclear weapons, while five members of the "nuclear club" keep having this right. To avoid dangerous nuclear proliferation, this treaty prohibits most of the states from possessing nuclear weapons, but made "nuclear club" members temporally exceptional.

The very important cause of the NPT is to avoid nuclear proliferation. So many states accepted such an inequality to avoid nuclear proliferation. However, we have to think of this treaty as a temporary tool. The embedded purpose of the NPT is total nuclear disarmament, and it should become reality as soon as possible, in order to take away this unfair treaty. It should have been temporary. But the treaty of 1968 is still here and in effect ... even 46 years later.

Q: About Article 6 of the NPT, did you think that nuclear weapons have to be eliminated?

A: Absolutely. I'm against the usage of, but also against the possession of nuclear weapons. It means that I'm in favor of the complete elimination of nuclear weapons, because it's like a crime against humanity.

Q: There was an unanimous vote for Point F. Does it mean that nobody expressed any objection?

A: No, it didn't take much time, and my colleagues were glad to end the text with this 6th article, very important for humanity. That did not take much time, and I am glad and proud about that. The ICJ felt it would be important to send such a message to the whole world.

Q: For Point E, 14 judges were split into two camps. It was a 7-7 vote. Were you worried about the possibility that more judges could be against than judges in favor?

A: I did know that we were divided. Not because I knew that there was at least five judges belonging to the Nuclear Weapon States, that was clear. But, still, they did not even vote together for the same side. The Chinese and Russian judges have voted differently from the French, the American and the British ones.

I have seen that we might have little margin to act, to manage. But, I did not know what to do to get out this tight situation until we had to vote.

Q: You have been a nuclear abolitionist. Then, why did you, as president, cast your vote to save the advisory opinion?

A: I have to tell the truth here, and to say that I was not totally glad to foresee the decision being adopted because of my casting a vote. It was a nightmare. Why? Because I was, and I still am, personally against, not only the use of nuclear weapons, but also the ownership of them, by any state. And I made myself clear in my declaration annex to the advisory opinion.

I took time to prepare. Generally, usually, the president of the court presides over a drafting committee elected for each case among the majority and composed of three judges. I had seen that I could not impose completely my own opinion for the elimination of nuclear weapons. It was the problem of self-defense. Then we had prepared some answers. Subsequently, Point E became the crucial point.

Q: What was your final thoughts at voting?

A: I had to think about it. If I had voted against because I was not completely satisfied by the wording of Point E, what would be the consequences?

The wording said, as I believed, as I strongly believed, that humanitarian law does not allow a state to use nuclear weapons. But it is "generally." I had to suppress this word. It was difficult because "maybe in the future," taking into account scientific and technological progress, some states could discover clean nuclear weapons, which can distinguish between civilians and soldiers. And it was added consequently the word "generally."

I was not completely happy, But, without Point E, the advisory opinion would have been nothing. This is the most important paragraph. On the day of voting, I had seen my colleagues. This judge was against; this one was in favor, etc. ...

Q: Then, your turn. ...

A: I told myself, I have to vote in favor of Point E, not as Mohammed Bedjaoui, not as a judge, but as an international civil servant to the international community, to safeguard the reputation of the court, to serve international law. And I had the possibility to make a declaration in which I could explain more completely, more frankly, that I'm against nuclear weapons.

Q: If you were not the president, would you have voted against it?

A: I think so. But it was although. ... Yes, I would have voted against. Because of the adverb "generally"

Q: You said you didn't agree with the wording, with the adverb "generally." Was there any problem with the legitimate defense?

A: In fact, we all agreed to say that legitimate defense exists. We were all able to agree to that. However, you will not be able to destroy humanity just to save one state. Saving one country is one thing, but destroying everything else is another. Let's be honest here, using a nuclear weapon will lead to the destruction of humanity.

Have you the right to destroy everything just to save one part of it? It would be absurd.

Q: Without Point F, would the whole text have been a failure?

A: I think so because Article F is the operational part, the compulsory part. The part with which we open the way for the General Assembly of the U.N. to act properly. Without that. ... it would have been different.

Without Point E, the whole advisory opinion would have been null and void. Without Point F, that would have been the same. Yes, we could not stop with Point E, because that would have been the same as sending an uncertain message of the court. That would not have been a proper way to conclude an advisory opinion. We had to show what we wanted to be accomplished. Having given our important recommendation of Point F, we have shown to the General Assembly the way to act, and then we have facilitated its mission. It is the purpose of this advisory opinion.

Q: Even without Point F, as president, could you agree to Point E?

A: In fact, no. Point E and Point F are in equilibrium. As for Point F, this point could open horizons, and did open us new horizons. I think it was the best advisory opinion published by the ICJ.

Q: The mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki came to the court and testified about the inhumanity of nuclear weapons. What did you think of their statements? Was there something which affected your thoughts?

A: It has just reinforced considerably my feeling about the fact we needed to do everything we could do. As president of the ICJ, I listened to the mayors of Nagasaki and Hiroshima, that's an imperishable memory. The two of them have been extremely moving, and they showed us very well that nuclear weapons are the weapons of evil. They told us about the inexpressible suffering of their populations.

When I was president of the ICJ, when this question had been raised, the court had personally received 3 million letters, documents and various things from the entire world, begging us to get rid of these weapons. I have appointed someone in the court to deal with all the things we received, and we put them in a special room inside the Peace Palace (that houses the ICJ). It was incredible. This advisory opinion was so important, because global opinion showed strong interest.

Q: A judge is a specialist of law, so he or she only moves and decides in following laws and rules. Is it possible for a judge to be influenced by the testimonies from Hiroshima and Nagasaki?

A: Yes, you're right about your definition of a judge. But an international judge, a judge of the ICJ, is, after all, a human being like everyone else. He has perfect mastery of international law, he must be, as a judge, working in a perfect spirit of independence.

That is perfectly right but he is also a human being, a man who has political convictions, and these convictions are something very personal which cannot be excluded in his judgments. He makes his judgment from the law, not from his personal feelings. But in this case, in this eminently political matter, we have to express ourselves, our opinion, based not only on the laws, but also on our consciousness, too.

Q: There was speculation that the ICJ might avoid delivering its advisory opinion.

A: In fact, everyone was probably expecting that we, the judges, would avoid the question or use doublespeak. But, I have to say that it is not what the ICJ is used to doing. Each one of its advisory opinions had really great importance. And as for its advisory opinions, which are just advice, just recommendations, they became more important than its judgments which are constraining. Because these advisory opinions are based on the law, on international law, and they enlighten the way to follow in order to stay in the legality. The ICJ published a lot of advisory opinions, nearly 30 since the court has been established.

In 1996, that was the 50th anniversary of the creation of the ICJ. And the court left a mark for this special year, in delivering this advisory opinion, an extremely important one. It was not for the 50th anniversary, but we did it with this kind of background. The U.N. General Assembly asked us to study that question as a matter of urgency. There was an emergency factor.

We already had our daily work. All the questions we were working on there, we urged ourselves to finish a great part of them, and we tried to give an answer to the U.N. General Assembly as soon as possible, as quickly as possible.

Q: How has the world accepted the advisory opinion?

A: Eighteen years later, we can see that the advisory opinion has now taken on more importance than ever, and its conclusion about putting pressure on every state around the table to reach a permanent and total nuclear disarmament is a very wise solution, and a necessary one.

Throughout these years, we have seen a huge dispute in the world about the interpretation of this 6th article. President Barack Obama introduced a halt to all the conservative politics introduced during the G.W. Bush administration, and aroused great hopes again. The Prague speech by President Obama was a new dawn for the world. Although paths to “the world without nuclear weapons” are not easy at all, his Prague speech made the ICJ's advisory opinion more actual than ever.

Q: In April, the Marshall Islands sued the nine countries with nuclear weapons at the ICJ, arguing they have violated their legal obligation to disarm. The legal appeal by the Marshall Islands is based on Point F of the advisory opinion.

A: This is a matter which is in the hands of the judges of the ICJ. I forbid myself therefore to say anything about it. But everyone knows that the court cannot ignore or forget one of its precedent decisions, like the one of July 1996.

Q: Tell me some historical background on nuclear disarmament and the U.N.?

A: The historical context was very important. We have to go back to 1946, and already then, after the war was over, six months after Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the U.N. created a resolution, the first resolution by the General Assembly, on Jan. 24, 1946. It was about the atomic bomb, and it says that we must create some commission in the U.N. to find the ways and the means to eliminate nuclear weapons.

Unfortunately, from 1947, the Cold War began, and this factor prevented efforts to get rid of nuclear weapons. However, the General Assembly adopted on Nov. 24, 1961, a very important resolution which sought the prohibition of any use of nuclear weapons. This resolution is extremely important, because it stipulates the condemnation of nuclear weapons, and it says that any state, which uses this weapon, perpetrates a crime against humanity and civilization.

But, as you already know, the General Assembly is suffering from a lack of authority, and is totally powerless. It's the parliament of the world but it can't take any resolution with compulsory significance. The General Assembly is different from the Security Council.

From this point of view, the General Assembly felt its lack of authority, and getting some frustration, especially on the matter of nuclear disarmament. Even conventional weapons disarmament was always

discussed outside the U.N., between the Great Powers. The General Assembly, when it felt its own frustration, asked for an extraordinary session of the U.N. in 1978 on disarmament. And in 1982, four years later, another new extraordinary session, about the same subject, was held.

To be pitied, everything led to bitter failure. Why is that? Because the Great Powers, the Super Great Powers, were always negotiating among themselves, or didn't even negotiate at all.

Q: And then, fortunately, the Cold War was over.

A: Yes, an important event occurred. In 1989, the Berlin Wall fell, the Soviet Union collapsed to pieces, Russia gave up the communism of those times, and a new chance for international peace followed the Cold War. Things were about to change.

The General Assembly decided to take up again the matter of the total elimination of nuclear weapons. In order to get more authority and more power, the General Assembly asked the ICJ for some enlightenment about the juridical statute of these weapons. To move forward, even against the will of the states which already have these weapons. The General Assembly asked, therefore, in December 1995 for an advisory opinion. And I have to say that, when the judges of the ICJ, when they gather around some contentious matter, they discuss it a lot, examine every point of the international laws, share notes ... and the legal discourses.

Usually, negotiations take three or four days, maybe one week for a banal matter. In this particular case, it took six months from January 1996 to July 1996 because the subject was really very important.

Q: Any concluding comments?

A: The nuclear weapon is the product of the adventure, equally exciting and terrifying, of the scientific and technological progress that man has made.

Today, it looks like humanity is living on borrowed time because nuclear weapons have a specific nature and unique characteristics which give them a destructive power still unequaled. After this weapon had been used for the first time in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Albert Camus said, "the civilization of the mechanics has reached its last degree of savagery."

The Atlantic Charter made the promise of "freeing man from fear," and the U.N. Charter swore "saving the following generations" from the curse of war. There is still a long way to go. Man stays, therefore, under

the effect of a permanent and perverse blackmail. We have to know how to free him. Every one of us has the duty to take part in that life-saving work for humanity.

1996 Nuke judgement (2)

NUKE JUDGEMENT: Dissenting ICJ judge says 1996 advisory opinion on nukes left a loophole

August 01, 2014

http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/politics/AJ201408010083

By MASATO TAINAKA/ Staff Writer

Editor's note: This is part of a four-part package of articles on the background of a landmark advisory opinion on nuclear weapons presented by the International Court of Justice in 1996.

Christopher Weeramantry, a former judge of the International Court of Justice, laments the lost chance in 1996 to declare nuclear weapons illegal once and for all.

Weeramantry, 87, of Sri Lanka voted against point 2-E in the ICJ's advisory opinion on nuclear weapons because he thought its ambiguous wording would leave a legal loophole.

A strong opponent of nuclear weapons, Weeramantry spoke to The Asahi Shimbun on July 18 in Colombo.

Regarding the outcome of the voting on point 2-E, Weeramantry said, "I personally regret that it went that way because the court had an opportunity of pronouncing nuclear weapons to be absolutely and totally illegal."

He explained that the loophole was created in the advisory opinion with the inclusion of the word "generally" in touching upon the illegality of nuclear weapons as well as the second part of point 2-E.

It said the ICJ "cannot conclude definitively, whether the threat or use of nuclear weapons would be lawful or unlawful in an extreme circumstance of self-defense, in which the very survival of a state would be at stake."

Weeramantry said, "A tiny window of opportunity was left open by 'extreme circumstance of self-defense' so the whole objective of a nuclear-free world is defeated by that proviso."

He added: "If we had closed the loophole, then I think nuclear weapons could not have been retained and could not have been manufactured by the new nuclear countries. There would be a lot of pressure to indict as a violation of international law."

Major differences of opinion emerged because judges from the five nuclear powers were on the ICJ. The judge from France, for example, argued that nuclear weapons had served as a deterrent.

Before the final vote on the advisory opinion, there were attempts to count the number of votes on each side. Complicating matters, one of the 15 judges who initially heard the case died before the final conclusion was reached.

"If that South American judge (from Venezuela) had been there, it might have made all the difference, because then there was no need for a casting vote (by the ICJ president)," Weeramantry said.

He added that point 2-F was still of great importance even 18 years after the advisory opinion was issued because "there is an obligation on all the nuclear powers to take steps toward ending their nuclear arsenals."

Weeramantry also expressed disappointment that Japan, as the only nation to have suffered from a nuclear weapon, had not taken a leading role in the nuclear disarmament movement.

He pointed to the difference between testimony given by the mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the official position of the Japanese government.

"The Japanese government has an ambivalent attitude because it is relying on U.S. protection," Weeramantry said.

He added: "Every person holding power in the world should visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki and hear the stories of the actual victims. People talk about the nuclear bomb without knowing the full realities."

NUKE JUDGEMENT/ Weeramantry: Small proviso ruins chance to declare nuclear weapons illegal
August 01, 2014

http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/politics/AJ201408010085

By MASATO TAINAKA/ Staff Writer

Editor's note: This is part of a four-part package of articles on the background of a landmark advisory opinion on nuclear weapons presented by the International Court of Justice in 1996.

Question: First of all, what do you think of the historical context of the 1996 ICJ advisory opinion?

Christopher Weeramantry: Well, I think, in the historical context of the court, that is the most important case that ever came before the international court. So many countries making submissions, we had witnesses, we had weeks of hearings and deliberations, and it was an issue of importance to the entire history of the world, because my personal view is that the future of humanity depends, to a large extent, on our being able to get rid of nuclear weapons.

So when the case came up before the court, of the illegality of nuclear weapons, I think that was absolutely historic. So certainly in all the--so many decades--of the court's existence, there was never a more important case.

Q: Now I would like to ask about the important paragraph, 2-E, of the advisory opinion. Could you tell me the reason why you were against point E: "... the threat or use of nuclear weapons would generally be contrary to the rules of international law applicable in armed conflict, and in particular the principles and rules of humanitarian law. However, ... the court cannot conclude definitively whether the threat or use of nuclear weapons would be lawful or unlawful in an extreme circumstance of self-defense, in which the very survival of a state would be at stake."

A: No, no, all this has to be taken together, those two clauses. And when they are taken together I cannot possibly vote for them. And because there was a slight exception here to the illegality of nuclear weapons--this was to satisfy some who thought that the weapons should be permitted to remain.

So I was for the total abolition of the weapon. I said in no circumstances whatsoever can it be legal, so I had to vote against that.

Q: There were 14 judges at that time, after one judge had died.

A: Yes, died. Yes. Now, if ... he was there, it might have been very different. We don't know.

Q: I would like to know how you inserted "generally" in point E.

A: That I don't know. I was not on the drafting committee anyway.

Q: Because, according to your dissenting opinion, you were strongly against that wording.

A: Yes. I think “generally” would have been inserted because everybody agreed, even those who were in favor of the bomb. They agree that, generally, it violates the principles of humanitarian law.

Q: Recently, a senior colleague of mine went to Paris and had an interview with former ICJ President Mohammed Bedjaoui. And he said that the drafting committee inserted the word “generally” in point E “for the future technological progress,” because in the future, human beings may be able to produce a small, smart, nuclear bomb that differentiates between combatants and civilians.

A: I totally disagree with that. How can a bomb have the intelligence to know that that man is a soldier and this man is a civilian? How can the bomb know that this is not going to damage the environment? How can that be assured when the nuclear reaction goes on for multiples of 20,000 years?

Q: Did you argue that during the discussion in 1996?

A: Of course. I put forward all these points of view.

Q: What was the response from the nuclear power judges, like the French or American ones?

A: There were judges who were totally against the bomb. For example, you can see from the voting patterns, judges who accepted that the bomb was very bad but thought that it should still be reserved as a deterrent because the bomb will keep the other party, the other “bad chap,” from using it, see, if I have the bomb.

So that kind of thinking was there.

Q: So did you insist that the word “generally” should be omitted and deleted?

A: Yeah, there would have been a discussion on every word of all this, and particularly the word “generally.” It’s a very important word. But I think that it is totally untenable to say that you can have a weapon in the future which will discriminate between the civilian and military person, and also that totally ignores our responsibility towards future generations.

The bomb clearly is going to damage future generations, not one generation but a thousand generations. And what right have you got to use it?

Q: Please let me ask about the final voting of the advisory opinion. Do you remember point E? That all the judges, 14 judges, split into two camps by seven votes to seven. Did you expect that?

A: Well, the case was going on for many weeks. And we had a rough idea how all our colleagues were thinking because this was a matter of discussion among us every day. And we had a rough idea how it was going.

But it seemed to be it would be balanced. And that's what it was, in fact, seven and seven.

Q: President Bedjaoui was also anti-nuclear, wasn't he?

A: I don't want to talk about that, casting the vote, because that casting vote is the vote that prevented the court from saying, once and for all, that nuclear weapons are illegal. If it had gone the other way, it would have made a huge difference. And I personally regret that it went that way.

Q: Why?

A: Well, because the court had an opportunity of pronouncing nuclear weapons to be absolutely and totally illegal. But a tiny window of opportunity was left open by, you know, in extreme circumstances of self-defense, or when you are under attack and your very survival is at stake.

So that little thing meant that you, therefore, have to keep nuclear weapons because you have to defend yourself. Therefore, you can't abolish nuclear weapons. Therefore, you must continue storing the nuclear weapons. So the whole objective of a nuclear-free world is defeated by that proviso.

[end of the article in parts 3 & 4]

1996 Nuke judgement (3)

Q: Why did those two contradictory parts co-exist in that one sentence?

A: These are two contradictory parts, in a way. But that is the work of the drafting committee. They could have their reasons for it. And they put it like that.

Q: And your group should oppose that idea, should split it into two parts.

A: It was clear that some wanted to keep open a window of opportunity for use in self-defense.

So perhaps it makes it a little more acceptable. That first part was put there saying we are condemning it-- we are condemning it. So this states the agenda position, that it is opposed to civilized rules of warfare. And the position was clear, that all loopholes for the use or the manufacture or the preservation or the storage of nuclear weapons, that all loopholes should be closed. That was my categorical position, and that was the view of those who opposed the nuclear weapons

Q: What was the response from other groups? Could you tell me about some of the discussion?

A: No, no, of course we had a lot of debate about that, as to why that should be there, and of course, one of the answers to that was that it is necessary for deterrence. And look, for 70 years or 60 years, we have not had war going to the nuclear weapon, so we have to have the nuclear weapon.

Which is a false argument, totally false, because ... even though we had the nuclear weapon, we were on the verge of war so many times. I think I have enumerated here.

Q: So, you must be disappointed.

A: Of course. It was a deep disappointment to see that a loophole was left open when we had every chance of closing it once and for all, and saying nuclear weapons should be banished from the face of the Earth.

Now, with that loophole, other nations were able, even India and Pakistan, to do research and try to get nuclear weapons, as we see.

Q: However, if President Bedjaoui didn't cast the "yes" vote, that whole point E would have been nothing, wouldn't have been established.

A: It would not be necessary at all. If nuclear weapons were said to be totally illegal, then it follows that they must all be banished ... That last point says that the nuclear powers, they can keep their weapons, but they must slowly, in good faith, take steps to get rid of that.

All that would have been totally unnecessary if they were said to be totally illegal. Or, if they were totally illegal, they have got to be stopped, eliminated.

Q: Some people say that it's better than nothing.

A: No, of course it is better than nothing. Better than nothing, certainly, because ... we have been able to argue that there is a duty on all the nuclear states to ...

Q: Point F.

A: ... point F. To get rid of their nuclear weapons, there is a duty, and that they must, in good faith, take steps to get rid of them.

Now, another thing we should, I should, mention is that, you know about the “nuclear winter.” You see this time, when Hiroshima and Nagasaki were attacked, they were “like sitting ducks.” You know. They could not retaliate. So the poor citizens of those two cities had to just take the nuclear bomb and suffer in silence.

But today, there are so many states that have nuclear bombs, there are thousands of nuclear weapons all over the world. And once a nuclear bomb is used today, you can be 100 percent certain that there will be retaliation.

And then the scientists had said, quite clearly, even at that stage, that when bombs start going in both directions, the atmosphere will be blocked out, blotted out, by the soot and all that, crops will fail throughout the world, and there will be a nuclear winter. There won’t be food for anybody on Earth, and the human race will perish.

So the nuclear winter is a certain result of the next use of a nuclear bomb. And that’s what we had, even at the time we wrote this judgment, that was quite clear. And, therefore, the bomb had to be totally banned.

Q: I see. Let me go back to the first question. What do you think of the historical context of the ICJ in 1996, the advisory opinion? Because the disarmament process has still been very, very slow. And nuclear proliferation has continued.

A: Of course. No, since our opinion, which was given in 1996, how many years now? Nearly 20 years.

Q: Eighteen years now.

A: Eighteen years. Right now, all arsenals should have gone. But even now, some powers have, say, thousands of nuclear weapons, and each nuclear weapon is so much more destructive than the ones even used on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and they are slowly getting rid of them.

But we can’t wait a hundred years for this; we have got to do it very quickly. And that is where this one will come in useful, where I have given about 15 reasons why the nuclear weapon, the next time it is used, it will be absolutely devastating to all of humanity, and the chance of it happening is greater due to some reasons.

One is that in those days there were only five nuclear powers. Now there are seven or eight, and there are more and more. More and more are trying to have nuclear weapons, and countries that have a lot of money will try to hire scientists, you know, nuclear scientists, who are prepared to come and give their

skill. And they can all try to make bombs, and we do not know whether any other two or three countries already have a secret nuclear bomb. So the number of countries is increasing.

Then, the availability of the material is there because all the nuclear reactors in the world have got nuclear waste, and even the International Atomic Energy Agency has no records of this.

Q: You are talking about horizontal nuclear proliferation, not only the five nuclear powers but also other countries.

A: No, then there is also research going on.

Q: How can we stop it? Would you think that the NPT is still useful for that purpose?

A: Of course, if the big powers are sincere about wanting to get rid of nuclear weapons, they will make much more meaningful cuts, and that is, you see, what we said. And remember that there can be no more important pronouncement of international law than a unanimous opinion of the International Court of Justice.

The International Court of Justice is at the apex of all the courts in the world. And if all 15 judges--or 14 judges--of that court agree on something, there can be no higher statement of the law. And this is the highest statement possible of the law in our world. That there is an obligation to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion, is it? A conclusion.

Q: Yes.

A: Negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects and a strict and effective international control.

Now, are the big powers prepared to subject their arsenals to strict and impartial international control? Are they working within a reasonable timeframe?

I would say a reasonable timeframe is, at the most, five years. Now, already 18 years have passed, and how much longer are we going to wait? And the possibility of even some nuclear accident

triggering off a war is ever-present. So we can't wait for another 20 years. We have already waited 18 years.

I would say the maximum, as a manifestation of good faith, they should negotiate with a view to getting rid of all their arsenals in five years. And there is also this point that the nuclear powers are telling other people not to have nuclear weapons, but they are having nuclear weapons, so nobody is going to listen to a policeman who is telling them not to do something which the policeman is doing.

There must be a commitment to total disarmament within a reasonable number of years, and to have delayed 18 years is just unreasonable, in the face of all these dangers, especially of the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

Q: It is point F. In the NPT, Article 6, right?

A: Yes.

Q: So without any timeframe, the nuclear powers ...

A: Yeah. But that's where the words "good faith" come in. "Good faith" means you must take a reasonable view. You can't say we can wait until the end of this century. You have to do it within the next three, four or five years, especially because of the rate of proliferation of weapons, the rate of proliferation of knowledge, the proliferation of materials, the proliferation of groups that could be interested in using this.

So we have got to do this very quickly, and an urgent message must go out. That, instead of just taking "their own sweet time" over it, they have got to do it with a sense of urgency.

Q: But it seems to me that nuclear powers make use of that phrase, or opinions, or the NPT or ICJ, to justify their arsenals as long as possible.

A: Yeah. But this can't go on forever. Now, suppose somebody were to ask, 25 years after this, "Is it reasonable for any power to have a single weapon?"

The simple answer is no. But then, that's not the way we are heading because after 18 years, the two major powers, the U.S. and Russia, have thousands of nuclear weapons in their arsenals, and other powers have hundreds. So it's something which is totally against the spirit of the highest pronouncement of the world's highest tribunal on international law.

Q: Has the 1996 ICJ advisory opinion made any difference?

A: Oh, yes. Oh, yes. I certainly think it has exposed to the world the fact that nuclear weapons offend the basic principles of international law, for humanitarian law is a very important part of international law. And every single principle of humanitarian law is violated by the bomb.

Q: At that time, the World Court Project tried to have some impact on the court, the ICJ discussion. Now also, the same or other NGOs are trying to ...

A: They are doing their best, yes.

Q: ... take a new initiative.

A: Yes.

Q: What do you think of that?

A: No, it's good that people should be taking steps to bring this to the attention of courts and lawyers, and the public, and the governments.

Q: What do you think of the difference between now and 18 years ago?

A: My view is that the problem is even more urgent now because the number of weapons is increasing. The research on the weapons is going on. And the weapons are more deadly today, much more deadly today, than they were in the time of Hiroshima. And the possibility of usage is growing, the possibility of accident and all of this makes it much more urgent now than it was in 1996.

Q: Do you think there is a need to have a certain legal framework like a nuclear weapon convention or something?

A: To make nuclear weapons illegal, you do not need a convention because nuclear weapons are absolutely illegal by the existing principles of international law.

Lots of people think you want a treaty to make nuclear weapons illegal. Now, under Article 38.1 of the statute of the international court, the sources of international law are stated.

One is the general principles of law recognized by civilized nations. Then there is customary international law. Then there are treaties and so on.

Now, some people think that a treaty is required to make a thing illegal. No. It's already illegal for thousands of years under customary principles of international law, the principles prevailing among civilized nations, what has come down to us from generations past.

Q: Let me go back to point E of the advisory opinion. If the president made a "no" vote, point E would have been nothing, wouldn't have been established. He, himself, was also not satisfied with the wording, especially the "generally" issue. But if he said, "It was a nightmare if he ..."

A: It was a nightmare?

Q: A nightmare. Because if he made a "no" vote, the whole point E and advisory opinion would have been nothing or not so relevant to the public opinion. What do you think?

A: My deep regret is that the vote went the way it did, to him. The vote should have been a categorical refusal. That's what it should have been. Anything less than that does not come up to the mark.

Like mine, like mine. No, not in any circumstances whatsoever. That is what I would have expected the anti-nuclear people to say. Not to leave a window open to use it.

Q: I understand what you mean. But the president, if Mr. Bedjaoui was not the president, he said, he would have voted "no."

A: I don't know. I don't know. I don't want to go into that.

Q: But you knew him very well beforehand, right?

A: We all knew each other.

Q: But the judge is also, in fact, a human being, so you can make a difference, I mean.

A: Of course. And this makes a difference for the whole history of it, could make a difference to world history.

Q: You were very straightforward in making a dissenting opinion there.

A: Yes. Well, that was the time, if ever there was a time, for a categorical rejection to be placed on the record of the nuclear weapon, in any circumstance whatsoever. That was like a heaven-sent opportunity, so we had to use it.

Point E is in two parts. ... One is that it is generally contrary to international law, and the other is the window of opportunity. So these two are very inconsistent. Anybody against the bomb had to vote against it.

Q: I cannot understand the logic of why two inconsistent parts coexist in point E.

A: I agree with you. It would have been better if they had been separate. And I totally disagree with the word "generally." "Generally" opens the loophole straightaway.

And, you know, if you study linguistics, every word in there, in every language, has so many different meanings. Now, the word "generally" can mean 51 percent or 52 percent. It can also mean 85 percent or 90 percent. It just means more than the majority, that's all. It is the vaguest of possible words.

Q: Some judges argue that it's better to have this word, "generally," because it's more objective. It opens a loophole. You say that, but they say that it's more, kind of, objective, and it gives, kind of, the opportunity for future technological progress or something like that.

A: How can that be technological progress if the argument is that you can make a bomb which can read the mind of a person and say, "This man is a noncombatant and this man ..."
Or that a bomb can differentiate, whatever that is. I totally disagree. That seems like fantasy.

Q: You discussed that during the meetings?

A: All I know, or remember, is we had the pro- and the anti- judges, and if we had just one vote on our side, if that poor South American judge had been there, it might have made all the difference, because then there was no need for a casting vote.

Q: Were you disappointed after that '96 advisory opinion announcement?

A: Yeah, I thought a great opportunity had been missed, of condemning the weapon once and for all. Because even getting the matter to the court was not easy. The General Assembly had to vote on that, to take the matter to the court. And that required a lot of persuasion and so on. Once it had come, that was the opportunity for us to assert the power of the law.

Q: However, I think in Hiroshima or in Nagasaki, the people were not so disappointed. I mean, they evaluated it by saying, "It's good."

A: Ah, they thought it was good.

Q: At least that ICJ judges ...

A: Were beginning to think about it.

Q: Yeah. And they also declared it's generally illegal. It was better than nothing.

A: Yeah, it is.

Q: Because they didn't expect that the ICJ would judge anything.

A: Oh yeah, it's better than nothing. That's right. Because they might have expected that it would be thrown out.

Q: It was the first judgment, anyway, at least, to nuclear weapons. So I think it's very, very important, still important, isn't it?

A: Very important. I think it's the most important case that ever came before our court--before any court--at any time.

Because, you know, the future of humanity depends on this.

Q: Right.

A: Because if there is another nuclear war, if another nuclear bomb is used anywhere, it will lead to an exchange of bombs. That's the end of civilization. So that's the end of the human race.

Q: But the Japanese government didn't give a clear idea on the illegality of nuclear weapons in the court.

A: No. But the Japanese people don't want the bomb, and the Japanese government, I think, has got an ambivalent attitude on it because it's relying, I think, on U.S. protection.

Q: The U.S. nuclear umbrella. Any opinion on that?

A: I think the nuclear umbrella is a total illegality. That's what I think. Because if you are threatening to use a nuclear weapon, you are threatening to massacre millions of innocent people. Nobody has the right to do that.

Q: If you go to Hiroshima and Nagasaki, you will hear the voice of the people who share that view, who are against, totally against, nuclear weapons.

A: It's so moving. Yes.

Q: But if you go to Tokyo and talk with the politicians or government people, they have another kind of ambivalent opinion.

A: That's right.

Q: It's very difficult to balance those two.

A: Yeah, but the world expects that Japan, as the one country to have suffered from a nuclear weapon, should give world leadership in opposing it. But Japan did not rise to that.

Q: Japan follows the step-by-step approach of the nuclear weapons states, that abolishment should be the ultimate goal, but not now.

A: Yes, yes. Incidentally, I was once a visiting professor at Tokyo University, and I did a book on human rights in Japan. I studied that very closely. And I think your system of civil liberties commissioners, in Japan, should be followed by the whole world. I've even written a newspaper column on human rights in Japan.

1996 Nuke judgement (4)

A: Yes, yes. Incidentally, I was once a visiting professor at Tokyo University, and I did a book on human rights in Japan. I studied that very closely. And I think your system of civil liberties commissioners, in Japan, should be followed by the whole world. I've even written a newspaper column on human rights in Japan.

Q: OK, Dr. Weeramantry, as for the last word, do you have anything to add to the '96 ICJ advisory opinion?

A: Well, I think I have said the main things, which is this was a historic occasion, and the judgment of the court did help, but would have helped in a much bigger way if we could have had a total declaration of illegality. We came close to that but not fully.

But if we had done so and closed the loophole, then I think a nuclear weapon could not have been retained or could not have been manufactured by the new nuclear countries, and there would be a lot of pressure to indict as a violation of international law.

So, speaking for myself, I would have liked to have a judgment saying that it was totally illegal, but we didn't achieve that, but we went some part of the way.

But there is room to put the judgment to good use if that last clause is implemented.

So, there is room for still achieving total prohibition if the last clause of the judgment, which is a unanimous judgment of all the judges of the court, is followed meticulously, which is that there is an obligation on all the nuclear powers in good faith to take steps towards ending their nuclear arsenals. That can still be done, and if that is done, it will change the face of the human future.

Q: So you mean that the 1996 ICJ advisory opinion still has big importance?

A: It still is of great importance. Especially the last part of it, which lays down ...

Q: Point F?

A: Yeah. Which lays down the obligation of all nuclear powers in good faith to take meaningful steps to end their arsenals.

Q: What would you expect Japan to do?

A: I would expect Japan, as the only country that has been the victim of actual nuclear bombs, to tell the whole world as strongly as it can the terrible effects of the nuclear bomb that was dropped twice on their country, and to try to persuade the population of the world that nuclear weapons are weapons that cannot, for a moment, be contemplated in human society.

Q: You visited Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 2001 and 2004.

A: Oh, I felt terribly and deeply saddened that such a thing should have ever have happened. And when you met the hibakusha and hear their stories individually, it makes you wonder how such a thing could ever have happened. And it also makes you think that every person holding power in the world should visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki and see for themselves the terrible effects of a nuclear weapon, and hear the stories of the actual victims.

You know, people, they talk about the nuclear bomb in abstract, so to speak, without knowing the full realities of it. That is vital.

Q: What would you, yourself, like to do for that purpose?

A: Well, I am doing the best I can to spread my awareness of the sufferings of the victims and the dangers of the bomb and the illegality of the whole thing. I am doing it as best I can.

But it needs public opinion to be built up. It also needs an educational process in the schools about international law and humanitarian law. And I think that all schools in the world should have some element of teaching, firstly about international law, which is very simple and can be easily put to students as far as general teachings are concerned, and also to try to break down the barriers between countries due to a lack of understanding of the civilizations of other countries.

You are born into a sort of box of your own civilization and know nothing about the other civilizations of the world. I think modern education has to break this down, especially because the children of today are going to be the global citizens of tomorrow. So we have to give them an inter-cultural understanding that this is very important, and governments all over the world are failing in doing this.

I would expect that a government of Japan would play a leadership role in this, and I see that they have played a leadership role, in many areas, but this is one area which urgently demands their attention.

Q: Thank you very much, Dr. Weeramantry.

A: I hope that will get communicated to the “powers that be.”

Japan should end reliance on US nuclear umbrella

August 2, 2014

NAGASAKI PEACE SYMPOSIUM: Panelists urge Japan to break away from U.S. nuclear umbrella

http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/social_affairs/AJ201408020049

By HIROSHI MATSUBARA/ AJW Staff Writer

NAGASAKI--As the only country victimized by atomic weapons, Japan should end its reliance on the U.S. nuclear umbrella for security, panelists said at the annual International Symposium for Peace here on Aug. 2.

In the symposium titled “The Road to Nuclear Weapons Abolition: To Overcome ‘Nuclear Umbrella,’” scholars said such a decision by Japan and other U.S. allies would move the world closer to nuclear abolition.

The symposium was held ahead of events in Hiroshima and Nagasaki this month to mark the 69th anniversary of the atomic bombings of the cities.

In his keynote speech, Gareth Evans, chancellor of Australian National University who served as Australia's foreign minister between 1988 and 1996, said Japan can send a strong message to the world concerning nuclear disarmament.

"I strongly believe that those of us, the U.S. allies, including my own country, who are presently sheltering or believing that we are sheltering under the U.S. nuclear umbrella, should be prepared to make it very clear our acceptance of a much-reduced role of nuclear weapons in our protection," Evans told an audience of 400 at Nagasaki Brick Hall.

"This is not an easy issue for Japan to deal with, torn between the horror of its 1945 experiences and its passion for nuclear protection, but a more robust commitment to really leading the way of nuclear disarmament would pay real dividends," he said.

"For us to continue to be hypocritical, arguing everyone else should not rely on nuclear protection as we do for our own security protection, it certainly does not help the global nonproliferation agenda, and it does not begin to be a recipe for reducing terrible nuclear risks, which no one understands more than the citizens of this city," Evans added.

Mitsuru Kurosawa, professor emeritus of international law at Osaka University, said it is utterly wrong for the Japanese government to think that the U.S. nuclear umbrella provides protection even in a non-nuclear contingency.

"Such a way of thinking not only ignores the reality of military strategy but is also dangerously harmful to the world's effort to reduce nuclear weapons," he said.

The symposium, sponsored by The Asahi Shimbun and held alternately in Nagasaki and Hiroshima, has offered a venue to discuss possible steps to reduce and abolish the world's nuclear arsenals.

At this year's event, panelists and guest speakers repeatedly raised concerns about Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's push for constitutional reinterpretation and other measures to strengthen Japan-U.S. military cooperation.

Panelist Fumiko Nishizaki, a professor of U.S. diplomatic history at the University of Tokyo's Graduate School of Arts and Science, said such a policy shift will inevitably strengthen Japan's reliance on the U.S. nuclear umbrella.

"Postwar Japanese have lived with ambiguity stemming from Article 9 of the Constitution and the country's reliance on the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty, and the government's recent moves are aimed at eliminating this ambiguity at a burst," Nishizaki said.

"But the path is leading Japan to strengthen its reliance on the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty and, psychologically, the theory of nuclear deterrence."

Can nuclear bombing be justified?

August 4, 2014

Former Dutch POWs in Nagasaki disagree whether A-bomb was justified

http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/social_affairs/AJ201408040060

By MAKI OKUBO/ Senior Staff Writer

While many of his former comrades believe that the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki played a vital role in ending the war, Ronald Scholte, a 90-year-old Dutch hibakusha, vehemently disagrees.

"Whatever it takes, we can never, ever say that it was good that an atomic bomb was dropped," he told The Asahi Shimbun during a recent interview at his residence in Gilze, the southern Netherlands.

Former Dutch prisoners of war such as Scholte, who survived the world's second atomic bombing in Nagasaki in 1945, have attested to its terror, but remain divided over justification of its use.

"The terrible weapon that I witnessed must not be used on humans again," Scholte said. "It is my responsibility to warn the world by telling of what I experienced (in Nagasaki)."

When the atomic bomb detonated over Nagasaki on Aug. 9, 1945, Scholte, who was imprisoned at the Fukuoka No. 14 Prisoner of War Camp in the city, was engaged in forced labor to construct a tunnel about 1.7 kilometers from Ground Zero.

At around 11 a.m., he heard a bomber high in the sky and someone shout that a parachute had been released from the aircraft. In the next instant, he was blown into the tunnel by a shock wave from the blast.

When he crawled out of the tunnel, it was dark everywhere and the city had been flattened with fires breaking out everywhere. He smelled the odor of burnt human flesh and saw charred bodies lying on the ground, people buried under collapsed houses and others wandering around with their skin peeling off their bodies.

Over the next three days, Scholte and his fellow inmates were forced to collect bodies of the victims, and what he witnessed during the assignment left him with indelible images of horror.

A half-charred body of a child was lying between bodies that may have been the child's parents. When he tried to carry the three bodies, the child's legs came off from the torso.

The native of Dutch-controlled Indonesia became a POW after the Japanese military occupied the Southeast Asian nation in 1942. He was often beaten by guards, and when three of his fellow inmates were executed, he was forced to carry their bodies, Scholte said.

In April 1943, Scholte was transferred to the POW camp in Nagasaki. But the atomic bomb effectively "blew away my hatred of Japan," he said.

After retiring from the Dutch military at the age of 56, he started writing and speaking publicly about his account of World War II. For the past four years, he has spoken on his experiences in Nagasaki at a local elementary school, and a DVD capturing his lecture has been used as a teaching material in schools.

At the end of the war, there were 195 Allied POWs who were imprisoned at the Fukuoka No. 14 POW Camp, including 152 Dutch nationals, 24 Australians and 19 Britons, according to POW Research Network Japan. Eight POWs were killed by the atomic bombing of Nagasaki.

Many of them were forced to work at the nearby Nagasaki shipyard of Mitsubishi Heavy Industries Ltd. Willy Buchel, a 94-year-old resident of Waalre, the southern Netherlands, was also imprisoned in the same POW camp and forced to work at a nearby factory.

On Aug. 9, 1945, he saw a bomber in the sky and dashed inside the factory building without thinking. The next instant, he saw a strong flash of a blinding white light, and he lost consciousness.

While he said he no longer holds bitterness toward the Japanese for what he endured during imprisonment, he still believes that the atomic bombs played a vital role in forcing Japan's surrender.

“The atomic bombs effectively ended the war and liberated us,” Buchel said. “Without them, we would have perished (in the POW camp), and so would have many more people.”

We need a worm's eye view

VOX POPULI: ‘Worm’s eye view’ can pave way to eradication of nuclear weapons

<http://ajw.asahi.com/article/views/vox/AJ201408060031>



A restored B-29 Enola Gay at the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum's Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center in Virginia (Asahi Shimbun file photo)

Vox Populi, Vox Dei is a daily column that runs on Page 1 of the vernacular Asahi Shimbun.

On Aug. 14, 1945, novelist Jun Takami (1907-1965) wrote in his diary: “Everyone has started saying, ‘Watch out for any bomber flying solo.’ Before, everyone was saying that bombers flying solo weren’t a real threat.”

Takami was referring to the emergent awareness that a B-29 flying solo was more dangerous than a squadron of B-29s. By mid-August 1945, reports of the devastating power of nuclear bombs, both factual and rumored, had reached the Kanagawa Prefecture city of Kamakura, where Takami was residing.

The B-29 bomber Enola Gay destroyed Hiroshima on Aug. 6, 1945. Of the Enola Gay’s crew of 12 airmen, the last surviving member, Theodore “Dutch” Van Kirk, died on July 28 at age 93. Throughout his life, Van Kirk reportedly justified the bombing and never thought it was a mistake.

The atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, hailed by some for ending the war quickly and saving the lives of many American troops, brought honor to the Enola Gay crew and mass destruction to the citizens of those two cities.

Paul Tibbets (1915-2007), the pilot of the Enola Gay, once told The Asahi Shimbun that he was not fighting the people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, but that he was fighting Japan, the country that had attacked his country.

Not only Tibbets, but also many Americans tend to view the atomic bombings and airstrikes by high-altitude bombers from the perspective of the skies above without considering the massive destruction and loss of civilian lives on the ground below.

On the ground, people were going about their day-to-day lives. Yoko Moriwaki, a first-year student at Hiroshima Kenritsu Dai-ichi Kojo (Hiroshima Prefectural No. 1 High School for Women), went to bed on the night of Aug. 5 after concluding her diary entry with these words: “Work begins tomorrow to prepare for the demolition of homes along the planned fire-blocking belt. I will work as hard as I can.”

Morikawa had no idea of what lay in store the following morning. She died at work near ground zero. She was 13 years old.

We need to have a “worm’s eye view,” not a bird’s eye view, to understand the unspeakably cruel destruction of tens of thousands of lives by a single bomb dropped from a single bomber. I believe this should be the starting point of any movement for total nuclear disarmament.

--The Asahi Shimbun, Aug. 6

* * *

"No" to nuclear weapons

August 6, 2014

Actress says Japan should always say 'no' to nuclear weapons

http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/people/AJ201408060024

THE ASAHI SHIMBUN

Born just a few months before the atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima on Aug. 6, 1945, actress Sayuri Yoshinaga has spoken out against nuclear weapons for most of her career.

She believes that Japan's experience as the only nation to have ever come under nuclear attacks makes it obligated to take a stand against these weapons of mass destruction.

"Even though Japan may fall under the nuclear umbrella (of the United States), we cannot forget the terrible devastation from the atomic bombs in Hiroshima and Nagasaki," Yoshinaga said in an interview with The Asahi Shimbun. "Everyone should seriously study what happened and regardless of what the situation is always say 'no' to nuclear weapons."

Her strong feelings on the issue have led to poetry readings related to nuclear weapons for close to three decades. Among the poets whose works she has recited is Sankichi Toge, who survived the atomic bombing of Hiroshima but died in 1953 at age 36.

A turning point that led to the poetry readings was Yoshinaga's appearance as the main character in the TV and movie versions of "Yumechiyo Nikki" (The diary of Yumechiyo). The character of Yumechiyo, who was still in her mother's womb when the atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, suffers from radiation illness after she is born.

The accident at the Fukushima No. 1 nuclear power plant in March 2011 has also made Yoshinaga question whether humans can coexist with nuclear energy.

"I still do not know the true force of nuclear energy," Yoshinaga said. "But I feel that Japan in particular should stop nuclear power generation because it is a nation with so many earthquakes, and nuclear reactors are built and managed in a totally unsafe way. We have to think about how to go about decommissioning nuclear plants."

Regarding the moves by the government to resume operations at nuclear plants and to even export nuclear power generation technology, Yoshinaga said: "I want to say 'goodbye to nuclear plants.' In order to protect everyone's lives, we should stop nuclear plants now since none are currently operating."

She added: "There are still many people working under very difficult conditions at the Fukushima plant, including dealing with water contaminated by radiation. Under such circumstances, it is unthinkable to be talking about selling nuclear plants to foreign nations."

Yoshinaga was also asked about the Abe Cabinet's decision to change the government interpretation of pacifist Article 9 of the Constitution to allow for the exercise of the right to collective self-defense and have the Self-Defense Forces go abroad to fight to protect other nations.

"I am very frightened by recent developments," she said. "I feel that something terrible is about to happen."

While she did express concerns about the current situation, she added: "I do not think we are at a stage where we can blame everything on bad politicians. We should protect the rights of each individual, and everyone should think seriously about the issues and speak up about how they feel."

As her way of seeking a world free from nuclear weapons, Yoshinaga has made CDs of her anti-nuclear weapon poetry readings in versions dedicated to Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

"Because I am an actress, I feel that reading poems will best transmit my feelings," she said. "I would next like to create a CD for Fukushima."

(This article was written by Gen Okamoto and Hideki Soejima.)

EDITORIAL: Ban nuclear weapons on humanitarian grounds

<http://ajw.asahi.com/article/views/editorial/AJ201408060026>

“Remember Hiroshima, Nagasaki,” goes the refrain in “Remember,” a number released last year by singer Shinobu Sato (lyrics by Rei Nakanishi, music by Kisaburo Suzuki). Since then, Sato has been singing this song at concerts all over Japan.

Why “remember”? It was often quoted by artist and nuclear disarmament activist Yoko Ono, who insisted that Japan, the world’s sole victim of nuclear attacks, should keep telling the rest of the world to “remember.” She explained, “There are too many people who don’t remember, aren’t there?”

She went on to express her wish that people around the world would imagine and understand the horrors of nuclear bombs before they say, “No more.”

Ono’s wish echoes the desperate appeals that hibakusha (atomic-bomb survivors) have been making to the international community for decades. Their appeals have often been ignored in the coldly calculating setting of international politics and nuclear disarmament negotiations.

But in this 69th year since the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the inhumanity of nuclear weapons is being highlighted anew. Momentum is surging among nations that are seeking total nuclear disarmament and asking, “Why can’t we ban nuclear weapons altogether on humanitarian grounds?”

DESTRUCTION THAT DEFIES ALL RELIEF EFFORT

In violence-torn Ukraine, Iraq, Gaza and elsewhere, many lives are being lost even as we speak. Some people think all lethal weapons are equally inhumane, be they nuclear, chemical or conventional missiles or guns. Still, nuclear weapons should be considered differently from the rest.

Over the last two years, four international conferences have been held about nuclear weapons, and each conference has produced a joint declaration condemning their inhumanity. The number of participating nations in support of these declarations has grown each time, from 16 to 34, 80 and 125.

In February this year, as many as 146 nations gathered in Nayarit, Mexico, for the International Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, although none of the five major nuclear nations--the United States, Russia, France, Britain and China--was in attendance.

Summing up the current state of affairs at the conference, the chairman noted that the impact of any nuclear detonation can spread far enough to cross national borders and that the effects of the destruction

of infrastructure and health damage from radiation will remain for an extremely long time. But no matter how badly relief work is needed, no country or international organ is fully equipped to handle it, the chairman pointed out.

Yet, he continued, there is no end to countries and terrorist groups that seek to possess nuclear weapons, and the danger of nuclear detonation by mistake or as an act of terror keeps increasing.

The chairman's observation echoed what many people have been thinking: When nuclear weapons that cause tremendous damage already exist in mind-boggling numbers, on what grounds can anyone ever say that the human race will still survive?

RETURN TO THE BASICS

In the latter half of the 20th century, humanity came face to face with grave challenges, such as global warming and the depletion of resources from mass consumption. As a result, we have come to accept certain limitations to our daily activities, if that is what will help the human race survive.

We believe the same sort of attitude is needed on matters of security. We cannot just sit and do nothing when we already have more than enough nuclear weapons hanging over our heads, so to speak, to drive the human race and civilization to extinction.

The Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty restricts the possession of nuclear weapons to the five major nuclear nations and requires them to proceed with nuclear disarmament with sincerity. But the treaty has proved less effective than expected because of the deeply ingrained belief that the "power of nuclear deterrence" guarantees the safety of the nation.

Given this situation, we must return to the basics and ban nuclear weapons on humanitarian grounds. We can start by prohibiting the pre-emptive use of nuclear weapons, and then proceed to banning their use under all circumstances, until they are completely eliminated.

CITIZENS DECIDE THE FUTURE

At the Nayarit conference, five atomic-bomb survivors were given more than one hour to make their presentations. This was unprecedented on a diplomatic stage.

Setsuko Thurlow, a Canadian resident, was 13 years old when she survived the Hiroshima atomic bomb 69 years ago. She gave a vivid account in English of how her classmates and relatives died before her eyes.

The majority of more than 70 conference attendees who participated in a general discussion session voiced empathy with what the hibakusha had to say.

In wrapping up the conference, the chairman called for tangible action, including the drafting of a treaty to ban nuclear weapons. His comments were hailed as a succinct summary of the discussions of the past five years regarding the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons, and also as a clear counterproposal to the nuclear nations that continue to rely on their nuclear arsenals.

In December this year, a conference in Vienna will take up where the Nayarit conference left off. Not only the five major nuclear nations, but also as many countries as possible should attend the Vienna conference and hear the discussions.

Three times in the past, the Japanese government refused to endorse joint statements condemning the inhumanity of nuclear weapons, and came under harsh criticism from the mayors and citizens of Hiroshima and Nagasaki for “contradicting its stated policy of seeking total nuclear disarmament as the government of the A-bombed nation.” But at Nayarit, the Japanese government finally came around.

Mayors for Peace, presided over by the mayor of Hiroshima, currently has an active membership exceeding 6,000 mayors around the world. With a growing nuclear risk now being felt globally, it appears that so many mayors are participating in the latest Mayors for Peace conference because they are aware of the sense of crisis being felt by the public at large.

Matters of national security must not be left to the government alone to decide. Whether something deviates from human decency is for us, ordinary citizens, to determine. Let us always bear that firmly in mind.

--The Asahi Shimbun, Aug. 6

How to let the world know about the horror?

August 6, 2014

Editorial: Spread our memories of the horrors of nuclear weapons

<http://mainichi.jp/english/english/perspectives/news/20140806p2a00m0na013000c.html>

This year marks the 69th anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima on Aug. 6 and Nagasaki on Aug. 9. The average age of bomb survivors is now nearing 80, and less than 200,000 of them remain. Every year there are fewer and fewer people who directly experienced the bombings, which makes passing down its memory even more important.

A tragic incident took place in Nagasaki in May. An A-bomb survivor was showing around a group of junior high school students on a school trip near the bomb's hypocenter, when some of them called the guide "a useless old man who escaped death." It symbolizes how difficult it has become to communicate the meaning and significance of the atomic bombings to younger generations.

In the United States, meanwhile, the last surviving crew member of the Enola Gay, which dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima, died in July. There are no more people who have direct knowledge of the circumstances of that bombing.

Both sides must now step up efforts to pass down our stories to younger generations and prevent the atomic bombings from being forgotten.

The Nagasaki Peace Declaration that is to be delivered this year on Aug. 9 will address the public's fears that the debate over collective self-defense and other national security issues is forcing the country to veer from its foundations as a nation that has experienced nuclear bombings and will never wage war again, overhauling the whole concept of Japan as a peaceful country.

Hiroshima Mayor Kazumi Matsui, meanwhile, earlier said that the right to collective self-defense would not be directly mentioned in Hiroshima's Peace Declaration, claiming that an appeal for pacifism sufficiently addresses the issue. However, the declaration will call for Japan to take to heart its 69-year run of not going to war, and to continue on its path as a peaceful nation.

While there may be a slight difference in tone between the two declarations, they have in common the concern that a shift in national security policy will increase the potential for bringing about the tragedies of war once again. We urge the administration of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe to respect the concerns of these cities.

Five years have passed since U.S. President Barack Obama called for a world without nuclear weapons. And yet some countries possess nuclear weapons while others do not. Some are dependent on a "nuclear umbrella" while others are not. A complex web of various interests and intentions has prevented the vision from moving closer to reality.

Japan, which relies on the U.S. nuclear deterrent, has been unable to take the lead toward this goal. A joint statement signed by Japan and other participants in the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Ministerial Meeting held in Hiroshima this April described nuclear weapons as inhumane for the first time. But the conference fell short of laying down a specific roadmap toward a Nuclear Weapons Convention that would ban the development, production, and use of nuclear weapons -- which is what many bomb survivors seek.

What is necessary to avoid war and eliminate nuclear weapons? Shigenori Takemoto, 82, who lost his sister to the A-bomb in Hiroshima and has shared his experiences as a survivor, says, "In the end, it will become a question of people's wisdom." He believes that because humankind has experienced the tragedy of war and atomic bombs, it possesses the capacity to prevent violence through painstaking discussion.

As the only country to have suffered nuclear attacks, let us offer some wisdom that will bring us closer to a world without nuclear weapons. Because bomb survivors' stories are becoming increasingly difficult to pass down, it is important now, more than ever, to let the world know the horrors of nuclear weapons.

Nuclear disarmament a "humanitarian imperative"

August 8, 2014

Nuclear disarmament is a humanitarian imperative

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2014/08/08/commentary/world-commentary/nuclear-disarmament-is-a-humanitarian-imperative/#.U-TlJWPi91s>

by Tadateru Konoe and Peter Maurer

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement's involvement in the nuclear debate dates back to the moment the first atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima. On Aug. 6, 1945, at 8:15 a.m., there was a flash of light over the city and in an instant, tens of thousands of people were dead, hospitals and health centers were incinerated and the city was left in ruins.

But in the midst of this appalling devastation, one hospital survived. The Hiroshima Red Cross Hospital — which miraculously escaped complete destruction despite its closeness to the epicenter of the blast — began to fill with casualties.

Yet, most equipment and medicine had been destroyed or was unusable, and many of its doctors and nurses had been killed or injured. But there was dedication, and there was help to come.

Dr. Marcel Junod of the International Committee of the Red Cross heard of the devastation and became the first non-Japanese doctor to assess the event. His reports are a chilling account of what occurs in the aftermath of a nuclear detonation.

The issue of nuclear weapons has remained a serious concern of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement for the past 69 years. We voiced our concern about the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons after their use in Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

As a result, in 1948 the 17th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement adopted a resolution calling for the prohibition of atomic weapons. This was followed by a resolution of the 18th International Conference in 1952. Later resolutions also urged the prohibition of all weapons of mass destruction.

More recently, in 2011, the Council of Delegates of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement again expressed its concern. It adopted a resolution stating that it is “deeply concerned about the destructive power of nuclear weapons, the unspeakable human suffering they cause, the difficulty of controlling their effects in space and time, the threat they pose to the environment and to future generations and the risks of escalation they create.”

It also appealed to states to ensure that nuclear weapons are never used again and to pursue negotiations to prohibit and completely eliminate nuclear weapons based on existing commitments and international obligations.

The movement’s determination to work toward these goals was further expressed in a four-year plan of action adopted in 2013.

We welcome the fact that states have begun to give greater attention to the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons. The international conferences that took place in Oslo in 2013 and Nayarit, Mexico, in 2014 were important events that helped shed light on the horrific effects of a nuclear detonation.

These meetings have confirmed to us that the use of any nuclear weapon would be catastrophic and would raise serious concerns under international humanitarian law. Indeed, more than ever, we find it difficult to envisage how any use of these weapons could be consistent with this body of law.

One of our important tasks as the world’s largest humanitarian network is to ensure that our appeal is heard around the world, and the coming year will provide some important opportunities to do that.

The year 2015 will mark the 70th anniversary of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki atomic bombings. This is an important moment for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, and indeed the entire world, to reflect on the dangers of these weapons and remind ourselves of the need to prohibit and eliminate them once and for all time.

In addition, states will continue to consider the consequences of nuclear weapons at the Third Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons being hosted by the government of Austria in December.

The 2015 Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons will also be an important moment for states to consider the discussions of the Oslo, Nayarit and Vienna meetings and to reflect on how best to advance nuclear disarmament.

We hope that the states in these forums will take into account the movement's views on nuclear weapons and our calls for greater action in this area. The 2015 Council of Delegates and the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent will also be an opportunity to take stock of the movement's activities on this subject.

In closing, we believe that the coming year is a pivotal time in the discussions about nuclear weapons. We urge international and nongovernmental organizations as well as the components of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement to redouble their efforts to raise awareness of the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons.

We also urge all states to recognize that nuclear disarmament is a humanitarian imperative and to reflect on how to make significant progress toward a world without nuclear weapons.

Humanity has been fortunate that nuclear weapons have not been used since those tragic days in August 1945. We must do all that we can to make sure that instances such as Hiroshima and Nagasaki never happen again.

*Tadateru Konoe is president of the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.
Peter Maurer is president of the International Committee of the Red Cross.*

Nuclear disarmament: Abe "all words and no action"

August 7, 2014

ANALYSIS: Despite anti-nuclear weapons speech, Abe has made little progress

http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/politics/AJ201408070039

By SHINYA SUGIZAKI/ Staff Writer

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe is apparently all words and no action when it comes to taking steps to reduce the world's nuclear arsenal.

On the 69th anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, he parroted U.S. President Barack Obama's call for a world without nuclear weapons.

"I pledge to make every effort toward the realization of permanent world peace so that there is no recurrence of the tragedy caused by nuclear weapons," Abe said in his speech during a commemorative ceremony in the city on Aug. 6.

However, in a meeting afterward with representatives of groups made up of atomic bomb survivors, Abe had to listen to criticism directed at the recent decision by his Cabinet to change the government interpretation of the Constitution to allow for the exercise of the right to collective self-defense.

Those representatives asked that Abe retract the decision since it would lead to Japan becoming a nation capable of waging war.

Abe justified the decision by citing his oft-used explanation about the safety of Japanese being paramount and pointed to the seriousness of the security situation facing Japan.

With regard to nuclear disarmament, Abe said, "We will play a leading role in the international community."

But that will not be easy for Japan, given its reliance on nuclear deterrence for its national security under the U.S. nuclear umbrella.

The difference between Japan and nations that do not have a military alliance with the United States was clearly demonstrated in a meeting of the Nonproliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI) in Hiroshima in April. Among the 12 nations in the initiative, those that have not signed alliance agreements with Washington called for the conclusion of an international treaty that would ban nuclear weapons.

However, Japan and other U.S. allies were decidedly passive in their responses to that proposal.

Because he represents a district in Hiroshima Prefecture, Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida worked hard to bring the NPDI meeting to the A-bombed city, the first time such a meeting has been held in Japan. Still, the NPDI is not high on the political agenda of the Abe administration, which has stressed strengthening the Japan-U.S. alliance as well as Japan's own defense capabilities.

Moreover, the Abe administration's efforts toward exporting nuclear energy technology also run counter to efforts being made on nuclear nonproliferation.

Japan has signed 14 nuclear energy agreements with other nations and international organizations. Those agreements have as a precondition that the technology will only be used for peaceful purposes.

Japan is currently negotiating a nuclear agreement with India, even though New Delhi is asking that it be allowed to reprocess spent nuclear fuel.

Japanese government officials are hesitant to go along with the request because the reprocessed fuel could be used to develop nuclear weapons.

A Foreign Ministry source said: "Peaceful use of nuclear technology and nuclear weapon production are the opposite sides of a coin. There could be some danger depending on the nation negotiating the nuclear agreement."

The myth of nuclear deterrence

August 11, 2014

NAGASAKI PEACE SYMPOSIUM: Panel calls on world to overcome myth of nuclear deterrence

http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/social_affairs/AJ201408110024

THE ASAHI SHIMBUN

NAGASAKI--How Japan, as a country that relies on the U.S. nuclear umbrella, should lead global efforts to reduce and abolish nuclear weapons was a major theme of a recent international conference.

The message from the International Symposium for Peace 2014 conference titled “The Road to Nuclear Weapons Abolition: Overcome ‘Nuclear Umbrella’” was that Japan and other countries under the nuclear umbrella must first reject the theory of nuclear deterrence.

The Aug. 2 event drew experts of international politics and nuclear weapons issues from Japan and Australia.

The annual symposium is held alternately in Hiroshima and Nagasaki to offer a venue for experts to discuss nuclear disarmament with citizens of the two cities that were hit by atomic bombs in August 1945. The panel members were: Gareth Evans, chancellor of Australian National University who served as the country’s foreign minister between 1988 and 1996; Hiromichi Umebayashi, director of the Research Center for Nuclear Weapons Abolition at Nagasaki University; Fumiko Nishizaki, a professor of U.S. diplomatic history at the University of Tokyo’s Graduate School of Arts and Science; and Mitsuru Kurosawa, professor emeritus of international law at Osaka University.

Rei Nakanishi, a popular songwriter and best-selling novelist, was invited as a guest speaker at the symposium.

On the stage, popular opera singer Shinobu Sato sang Nakanishi’s newly released anti-nuclear weapons song “Remember” with junior high school students from the nearby city of Isahaya.

In his lecture, Nakanishi raised concerns about Prime Minister Shinzo Abe’s constitutional reinterpretation and other measures to strengthen Japan-U.S. military cooperation.

“While Prime Minister Shinzo Abe says Japan must become a ‘proactive contributor to peace,’ it is utterly contradictory for a country to pursue peace with weapons in its hand,” Nakanishi told an audience of 400 at Nagasaki Brick Hall.

“To pursue peace simply translates to not waging a war, and squarely facing the atrocities of warfare, which is still omnipresent, should be the starting point for us to work toward peace,” Nakanishi said. Following are summaries of the opening remarks by the four experts. They were abridged and reorganized by The Asahi Shimbun, which co-sponsored the event with Nagasaki.

* * *

GARETH EVANS

None of the nuclear-armed states has committed to any specific timetable for the major reduction of stockpiles, let alone their abolition. Across Asia, nuclear stockpiles are growing. The six-party talks process has not done anything to curb North Korea’s nuclear provocations, and there is continuing uncertainty about Iran’s nuclear program.

Confronted with these realities, it is tempting to become overwhelmed with pessimism, but we would be failing to meet our own obligations to do anything and everything to reduce, and ultimately eliminate, nuclear weapons. So what is a realistic global disarmament agenda to be advocating in the present environment?

First, we have to make not just the emotional but intellectual case for abolition to challenge head-on the Cold War mind-set that we all benefit from nuclear deterrence, and in the case of U.S. allies, from sheltering under its nuclear umbrella. The world today is not one, if it ever was, in which the governments in Moscow or Washington are likely to hurl swarms of nuclear missiles at each other, nor is it a world in which China or the United States would conceivably ever intentionally start a nuclear war against the other.

Nuclear weapons are simply not the deterrent or strategic stabilizer they may seem and encourage proliferation more than they restrain it, because so long as any country has nuclear weapons, others will want them.

Second, we have to make the argument for nuclear disarmament, and for a timeline in getting there, in a way that is seen as credible by policymakers. There will need to be two distinct stages: first “minimization,” then “elimination.”

Third, we have to focus hard on getting some movement on numbers. The obvious place to start on numerical reductions has always been bilateral negotiations between the United States and Russia, but such negotiations are obviously for the time being at a dead end. If bilateral and multilateral arms reductions are going nowhere for now, the only way of getting reductions in numbers is going to be unilateral.

The smart place to start, and one that might conceivably even be domestically politically salable, would be for the United States to wave goodbye to the land-based component of its triad, which is wildly expensive to maintain in an environment where there are huge budgetary imperatives to massively cut expenditure. The fourth need is to persuade the nuclear-weapon states to rethink their resistance to the humanitarian consequences movement. The unhappiness of the nuclear-weapon states with any talk of humanitarian impact is not a new phenomenon. This is an issue on which they have always felt uncomfortable, because they fear the consequences of it becoming central to the argument about the future of nuclear weapons. The fifth and final strategy, which is my highest immediate priority, is to start a serious movement to reduce reliance on the U.S. nuclear umbrella.

The U.S. allies, including my own country, who are presently sheltering under the U.S. nuclear umbrella, should be prepared to make clear our acceptance of a much reduced role for nuclear weapons in our protection. The Obama administration has wanted its Asian and European allies to go down the path of accepting a declaration by it that the ‘sole purpose’ of the U.S. nuclear arsenal is to deter a nuclear attack, not any other kind.

But any such move was halted by the resistance of South Korea and a number of NATO allies. This has not been an easy issue for Japan to deal with, torn between the horror of its 1945 experience and its passion for nuclear protection, but a more robust commitment to really leading the way on nuclear disarmament would pay it real dividends. For us to continue to be as hypocritical as arguing that everyone else do as we say but not as we do, when it comes to reliance on nuclear weapons for our security protection, certainly does not help the nonproliferation agenda.

HIROMICHI UMEBAYASHI

As a means to overcome the theory of nuclear deterrence and reduce reliance on the U.S. nuclear umbrella, the Japanese government can work to create a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Northeast Asia. There are five nuclear-free zones in the world today, and their achievements illustrate that it requires tripartite mechanisms to ensure a nuclear-free zone.

In addition to the ban on the countries in the region from arming themselves with nuclear weapons, nuclear powers outside the region must engage “passive security” that they will not use, or intimidate to use, nuclear weapons in the zone. A joint watchdog organization must also be set up to ensure the mechanism is working.

In Northeast Asia, experts are discussing an idea to create a nuclear-free zone covering Japan, South Korea and North Korea. Three nuclear powers in the six-party talks--the United States, Russia and China--should agree to engage “passive security” to help achieve the goal. I believe it is a practical idea for Japan to reduce reliance on the U.S. nuclear umbrella.

FUMIKO NISHIZAKI

The United States and Russia have called on North Korea, Iran and other countries to comply with a nonproliferation framework while arming themselves with thousands of nuclear missiles. These two

camps appear to have conflicting goals, but they are working hand in hand in effect to encourage nuclear proliferation and hinder nuclear arms reduction.

What we need in our path toward nuclear abolition is talk of the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons from a victim's perspective. What we have experienced in the past shows that there clearly is a moral boundary that shouldn't be crossed when it comes to nuclear weapons. We must start our commitment to efforts to abolish nuclear weapons, having it as our starting point that we cannot tolerate the damages of nuclear weapons.

MITSURU KUROSAWA

The process of effectuating the land-mine ban treaty has left us with a good lesson for our efforts to ultimately abolish nuclear weapons. The treaty was first signed and brought into effect by countries that do not hold land mines, without the United States, Russia and other countries that are reliant on land mines.

The presence of the treaty still gave moral advantage to the opponents of land mines and a tool for them to pressure countries owning land mines. I believe the same strategy could be employed by non-nuclear nations.

First, they should sign a treaty to ban nuclear weapons and then pressure nuclear powers to abandon their nuclear arsenals using the treaty as leverage.

The myth of nuclear deterrence must be also challenged so that nuclear powers can no longer justify possessing nuclear weapons. Nuclear powers should be also encouraged to adopt a "no first use" policy in which they ban themselves from using nuclear weapons unless first attacked by an enemy with a nuclear arsenal. It will give nuclear weapons a much reduced role.

"Volatile" countries and nukes

August 14, 2014

Danger from loose nukes in volatile countries

Nobody would dispute the danger inherent in possessing nuclear assets. But that danger becomes far more acute in a combat zone, where nuclear materials and weapons are at risk of theft, and reactors can become bombing targets.

These risks — most apparent in today's Middle East — raise troubling questions about the security of nuclear assets in volatile countries everywhere.

Two recent events demonstrate what is at stake. On July 9, the militant group now known as the Islamic State captured 40 kg of uranium compounds at Mosul University in Iraq. The captured uranium was not weapons-grade; international inspectors removed all sensitive material from Iraq following the 1991 Gulf War (which is why it was absent when the United States invaded in 2003). But what international response, if any, would have been initiated if the cache had been highly enriched?

On the same day, Hamas launched three powerful Iranian-designed rockets from Gaza at Israel's Dimona reactor. Luckily, two missed the target, and Israel managed to intercept the third. But the episode represented a serious escalation of hostilities and served as an important reminder of the vulnerability of nuclear reactors in war zones.

In fact, Hamas made similar attempts to attack the Dimona complex in 2012, as did Iraq in 1991, with the aim of releasing the site's contents to inflict radiological damage on Israel's population. (The perpetrators

appeared clueless to the fact that certain weather conditions would have concentrated the radioactive debris in the Palestinian-majority West Bank.)

It is possible that these events are an aberration. After all, the only conflict so far in which authorities have lost control of sensitive nuclear materials was the Georgia-Abkhazia War in the 1990s, when unknown forces seized a small amount of highly enriched uranium from a research institute.

Likewise, though there have been numerous attacks on nuclear reactors under construction, the sole threat to an operating plant in a combat zone outside of Israel occurred at the start of the fighting in ex-Yugoslavia, when Serbian nationalists considered attacking Slovenia's Krško nuclear power plant and sent warplanes over the site. The plant's operators temporarily halted electricity generation to curb the risk of a radiation release, but nothing came of the threat.

Indeed, whenever nuclear assets have been least secure — during the Soviet Union's collapse, China's Cultural Revolution, and the Algiers putsch (when a group of mutinous retired generals set their sights on a nuclear device that France was testing in the Algerian desert) — they have not been compromised. Even in Ukraine today, despite the escalating civil conflict, the country's 15 nuclear power plants have remained untouched (though even with new defensive measures taken by Ukrainian officials, this could easily change).

It is impossible to know whether this benign pattern will hold. But recent developments in the Middle East suggest that there are grounds for concern in other volatile countries, namely Pakistan, North Korea, and Iran.

Pakistan has a large nuclear weapons program and faces an expansive jihadi insurgency, which previously attacked military bases suspected of housing nuclear assets. Though Pakistan has not experienced a nuclear breach, and the government insists that safeguards remain robust, the country's increasingly frequent and severe bouts of instability raise serious questions about the future.

While North Korea's nuclear arsenal is much smaller, persistent doubts about the regime's sustainability make it a matter of grave concern. In the event of the regime's collapse — a distinct possibility — it would be difficult to prevent the diversion of its assets, or even the use of its weapons.

For its part, Iran seems relatively stable, at least compared to its neighbors. But it faces an uncertain political future. If a power struggle emerges, the large Bushehr reactor could be used as a bargaining chip. To mitigate such risks, the international community could maintain its traditional policy of sitting tight and hoping that governments retain control of their nuclear infrastructure. But the United States, for one, is no longer satisfied with this approach.

According to media reports, it has devised a strategy for deploying Special Forces to neutralize Pakistan's nuclear arsenal in the event that its authorities lose control. And some government-connected think tanks have explored the possibility of deploying U.S. combat forces to address nuclear risks in North Korea if the regime crumbles.

Such plans, however, are by no means foolproof — not least owing to the difficulties of finding concealed nuclear assets and safeguarding reactors. Moreover, the American public's willingness to become enmeshed in yet another risky military venture, when boosting homeland security could suffice, is dubious, at best.

Instead of waiting for a major development to force hurried action, the world's major powers should engage in a full-throated debate to determine the best approach to address nuclear risks in volatile countries, seeking ways to cooperate whenever necessary. After all, even rival powers like China and the U.S. or India and Pakistan share an interest in preventing the world's most dangerous weapons from falling under the control of its most fanatical minds.

Bennett Ramberg, a policy analyst in the U.S. State Department's Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs under President George H.W. Bush, is the author of "Destruction of Nuclear Energy Facilities in War and Nuclear Power Plants as Weapons for the Enemy." © 2014 Project Syndicate www.project-syndicate.org

Nuclear weapons "anti-humanitarian" by nature

August 30, 2014

INTERVIEW/ Alexander Kmentt: Focus should be on anti-humanitarian nature of nuclear weapons

<http://ajw.asahi.com/article/views/opinion/AJ201408300018>

BY MASATO TAINAKA/ Staff Writer

With the 70th anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki next year, there still is a long way to go to achieve a "world without nuclear weapons," which U.S. President Barack Obama called for in his historic address in Prague in 2009.

Alexander Kmentt, director for Disarmament, Arms Control and Non-Proliferation of the Austrian Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs, said in an interview with The Asahi Shimbun that his recent visits to Hiroshima and Nagasaki convinced him that more focus on the anti-humanitarian nature of nuclear weapons could lead to a breakthrough on the issue.

Kmentt's native Austria will host the third international conference on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons in Vienna in December.

The career diplomat urges the international community to change the way it talks about nuclear disarmament.

Excerpts from the interview follow:

* * *

Question: What is the purpose of the third international conference on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons in Vienna in December?

Alexander Kmentt: The purpose of the conference from the Austrian perspective is to create and generate as much momentum for nuclear disarmament as possible. We think that some of the key findings are clear. For instance, the consequence of nuclear weapons use, if you look at health, environment, social order, economy, food security, these consequences are far greater than we had previously thought, and there are research findings suggesting that the consequence of the next nuclear weapons use would be far greater than the tragedies of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. We will focus on several aspects of the consequences of nuclear weapons, including hearing testimonies, and we will also look at some of the consequences of the time of nuclear weapons tests. Similarly, look at the risks of human error and technical error and so on, lots of information has become available on very near misses in the past. So the risks are also considerably graver than we were led to believe. Nuclear weapons are complex machines like every other complex machine; they cannot be absolutely fail-safe.

We believe that the focus on humanitarian consequences and risks of nuclear weapons is an extremely important development and has the potential to refocus the international community on the urgency of nuclear disarmament to change the way we talk about nuclear weapons. That's the reason why the Austrian government decided to host this conference, to push for more progress on nuclear disarmament. We hope to pull together the key findings of the conference in Vienna and two previous meetings in Norway (March 2013) and Mexico (February 2014). The conference will be summarized by a chair's summary. We hope to take this to the United Nations Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference, which will take place in New York in April and May next year, to push for concrete progress.

Q: You visited Hiroshima and Nagasaki for the first time. What did you learn there?

A: A lot because I have a lot of theory and knowledge of nuclear weapons but being there, speaking to hibakusha (atomic bomb survivors), being at the museums, imagining what happened, it's unimaginable but to be there to understand it better I learned a lot, especially talking to so many people was excellent. I met Mr. (Sumiteru) Taniguchi, for instance. I knew the photo of his injuries (as a consequence of the atomic bombing in Nagasaki) for a long time. I couldn't believe that I met him in person. This was very moving.

I feel very much energized in the preparation of the Vienna conference because it shows that seeing the devastation that happened in Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the human suffering makes me believe that this humanitarian approach is the right way to look at nuclear weapons. They are security issues in many countries but also they are extremely unbelievably cruel weapons.

Q: The five nuclear weapon states under the NPT, or the United States, Russia, Britain, France and China, did not take part in the two previous "humanitarian" conferences in Norway and Mexico. How could you persuade them to join the next Vienna conference?

A: We hope more countries will come to Vienna than in Mexico (146 countries participated), including some of the nuclear weapon states. We hope that some of them will change their position and participate because I believe it's a mistake not to engage in this important initiative.

Q: I've heard that the United States is interested in joining, perhaps in an observer status?

A: We are in contact with the United States as we are in contact with other countries. I think the United States is interested in learning about our plans. And it's true that so far the discussion with the United States has been very positive. Of course, no final decision has been made. I think it's clearly in the interests of the nuclear weapon states to participate because this humanitarian focus will not disappear. It enjoys growing interest and support by more and more states and a large part of civil society. Nuclear weapon states should have a very clear interest to not be outside of this discussion. I personally believe that the United States has realized this and is exploring ways to participate. We hope it will be successful.

Q: The nuclear weapon states as well as their allies, including Japan, seem to be very cautious about the debate because it would eventually lead to a discussion about a certain legally binding procedure like the debate you experienced in the Mexico conference.

A: I can only say we will focus on the consequences and on the risks of this issue. Since nuclear weapon states have these weapons, and non-nuclear weapon states have urgent concerns and questions, it's important for nuclear weapon states to come and engage with us. This is where a collaboration of civil society and an increasing number of states having started to approach nuclear weapons from a different way. We only talk about nuclear weapons from a security policy approach. So let's try to change the way we talk about nuclear weapons. The debate should be understandable not only for diplomats and security experts but for ordinary people in civil society. The humanitarian approach really should be something that should unite everybody.

Q: During the speeches in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, you mentioned that the NPT is in serious trouble and losing credibility. Could you explain it in detail?

A: The NPT is the only treaty that contains a legally binding obligation for nuclear disarmament and continues to be the most important treaty. In this treaty, over the course of many years, very strong commitments have been made by the nuclear weapon states to make progress on nuclear disarmament. The latest one was in 2010 when all member states agreed on the action plan on nuclear disarmament. But if we see the situation after four years, less than a year before the next NPT review conference, where we are supposed to assess what has been taken in terms of urgent steps to implement this action plan, we need to realize that very little has been achieved. On the fundamentals, we have, of course, since the end of

the Cold War, seen a reduction of nuclear weapons. This is extremely important. I don't say that this is not important. The incredible number of nuclear weapons produced in the Cold War has been reduced now to a level of about 16,000. But each of these weapons has a destructive force far exceeding the nuclear weapons used in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Despite reductions, we are far from a world without nuclear weapons and in the doctrines of nuclear weapon states, in the security approach, nuclear weapons still play an extremely important role, a fundamental role.

But at the same time, we see extremely significant financial investments in nuclear weapon states in the nuclear weapons infrastructure. Compared to the very welcome reduction of numbers, there is a trend in the other direction, which is very disconcerting. Rich countries would decide to allocate very significant amounts of money in the modernization and sustainment of nuclear weapons. The nuclear weapon states seem to be set on relying on nuclear weapons for the long term. So I believe more and more non-nuclear weapon states are becoming to realize that while the nuclear weapon states have a commitment on paper (the NPT articles and its action plans), the actions that have been taken are not living out these words on paper.

Q: Would you believe that the NPT is still durable or useful for the purpose of nuclear weapons disarmament and non-proliferation?

A: If we believe that the NPT is an important treaty, which Austria does, we need to focus a lot on giving more credibility to Article 6, and we believe that focus on the humanitarian consequences is absolutely in line with supporting the NPT. NPT Article 6 is the only legally binding international obligation for nuclear disarmament. Now it is being challenged, first of all, because you have several countries possessing nuclear weapons that are not part of the NPT, and it's being challenged because nuclear weapon states' implementation of Article 6 is, at least in the eyes of many, is not going as well as it should, and there are even serious questions as to what extent nuclear disarmament is actually being pursued because of modernization programs in nuclear weapon states.

At the same time, we have four countries outside the NPT (India, Pakistan, Israel and North Korea) that have nuclear weapons. This trend also doesn't look very good because nuclear technology is no longer confined to a handful of highly developed countries. Nuclear technology is becoming more and more accessible, so the decision to move to nuclear weapons is more and more becoming an overly political one rather than one of capability and scientific knowledge as opposed to the case in the 20th century. We are in the situation where the states that already have nuclear weapons continue to insist on the importance of nuclear weapons for their own security. We have several countries outside of the NPT building up their nuclear weapons program.

At the same time, we have more and more states getting closer to the capability of developing nuclear weapons themselves. There will always be countries who perceive their own military power to be either better or worse compared to another one. All of this combined as rationale to develop nuclear weapons as status symbols makes for a situation where the trend to explore proliferation almost inevitable unless it is possible to fundamentally change the discourse on nuclear weapons.

Q: The nuclear weapon states insist that they take a so-called "step-by-step" approach for nuclear disarmament, and the Japanese government supports it as "realistic." However, it seems that there is no time frame and a deadline for concluding negotiations.

A: The step-by-step approach is very logical but it's not working as well as it should. The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) has not been entered into force since it was adopted 18 years ago. The next step, the Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT), hasn't even begun to be negotiated because we can't agree on the program of the work at the Conference on Disarmament (CD). So, it is no longer possible to repeat that step-by-step approach if it becomes increasingly clear that it's not actually working.

Q: More and more, citizens of Hiroshima and Nagasaki as well as international NGOs are demanding governments to start negotiations for a legally binding procedure such as a Nuclear Weapons Convention and so on.

A: It's true that some NGOs are pushing for a particular approach or a ban treaty. If you look at the position of states, there is a broad range of views. So there is no clear picture as to what unites the states that participate in the conference. It's the belief that we need to do something different compared to how we have done it in the past, and the focus on the humanitarian aspect is an important component of it. It is about looking at the consequences and the risks. If you do that seriously, then the equation about the utility of nuclear weapons in our belief should change, and once the question about the utility of nuclear weapons and the security values of nuclear weapons has changed, then you discuss how best to do it.

Q: There are treaties to ban antipersonnel land mines and cluster bombs. Would you think that kind of legal framework banning nuclear weapons could be achieved?

A: It's a different weapon, it's a weapon in the eyes of some countries, nuclear weapon states and allies, has much more importance for security than land mines ever had. So, when you look at land mines, the humanitarian problem compared to the military value was relatively easy. The suffering from land mines is much greater than the value of land mines for the military. For nuclear weapons, it's much more difficult to convince countries that rely on nuclear weapons on humanitarian grounds that they can give up nuclear weapons. The value that these countries attached to nuclear weapons is much higher. So, in that respect, you cannot compare.

The Austrian view is that we actually have no preference. We have tried over the years a number of initiatives, so we have no fixed view what the exact process should look like. We are willing and interested in supporting any process that brings progress, including a ban treaty. We don't really think it's important how we make progress, but we cannot stand still. If you don't make progress, you take a step back. This is no longer possible. The Conference on Disarmament would have been working, and would have been in full swing negotiating a treaty banning fissile material and the CTBT would have been enforced. Nuclear weapon states need to respond more constructively. We need to find ways of avoiding standing still.

Q: Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida has already said that Japan would participate in the Vienna conference.

A: I think Japan has traditionally been one of the most active promoters of nuclear disarmament and has participated in the two previous conferences. We hope that governmental and civil society representatives from Japan, from Hiroshima and from Nagasaki, participate. The conference will be very open. It will be, of course, for governments, but we hope for very strong civil society participation. We hope for parliamentarians to participate and NGOs. The voices of Hiroshima and Nagasaki are unique because they are the only people who have experienced this tragedy firsthand, and play an extremely important role to educate the world that we need to eliminate nuclear weapons so that this never happens again. The hibakusha session in the Mexico conference was powerful. We want them to be heard in Vienna as well.

* * *

Alexander Kmentt, born in 1965, is a career diplomat of Austria. He has assumed key posts at such bodies as the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization. He also was deputy permanent representative of Austria to the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva.

Hope

September 20, 2014

Ex-special assistant to U.S. presidents hopes Japan takes lead in denuclearizing East Asia

<http://mainichi.jp/english/english/newsselect/news/20140920p2a00m0na005000c.html>

As North Korea advances its nuclear development, China expands its military capacity and Japan moves to adopt a more hawkish self-defense stance, some lawmakers from Japan's ruling and opposition parties are warming to the idea of a nuclear weapons-free zone in Northeast Asia -- a concept once thought to be unrealistic.

One prominent advocate of such a zone is Morton H. Halperin, 76, a former special assistant to presidents of the United States who was previously in charge of nuclear strategy within the nuclear superpower.

From Sept. 14, Halperin participated in a workshop held in Tokyo under the Chatham House Rule.

Participants including senior Japanese Foreign Ministry officials and experts from the United States, China, South Korea and Russia discussed problems associated with a nuclear weapons-free zone.

September 20, 2014(Mainichi Japan)

What has India gained?



October 6, 2014

India's illusory nuclear gains

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2014/10/06/commentary/world-commentary/indias-illusory-nuclear-gains/#.VDQzGhZJn4w>

dessin

by Ramesh Thakur

This is the first of a two-part series on India's nuclear weaponization.

In May 1998, India conducted five nuclear tests. Even if one were to concede the tests were understandable, the question arises: What did India gain? The short answer, contrary to facile claims of strategic, military or political utility, and cost-effectiveness is: not much.

Unilateral nuclear disarmament is unlikely by any of the nuclear-armed states, including India, and is thus unrealistic as a policy goal. However, a denuclearized world that includes the destruction of India's nuclear stockpile would favorably affect the balance of India's security and other interests like development and social welfare, national and international interests, and material interests and value goals.

Although prospects for nuclear disarmament look dim, especially after the Ukraine crisis, the goal of an eventually denuclearized world is both necessary and feasible. For nuclear peace to hold, deterrence and fail-safe mechanisms must work every single time.

For nuclear Armageddon, deterrence or fail-safe mechanisms need to break down only once. This is not a comforting equation. As long as any one country has nuclear weapons, others will want them. As long as nuclear weapons exist, they will be used again someday by design, miscalculation, rogue launch, human error or system malfunction. And any nuclear war fought by any set of nuclear-armed states could be catastrophic for the whole world.

Nuclear weapons may be sought for (1) compellence, (2) defense, (3) deterrence and/or (4) status.

"Compellence" means the use of coercion to force an adversary to stop or reverse something already being done, or to do something he would not otherwise do. There is no demonstrable instance of a nonnuclear state having been cowed into changing its behavior by the threat of being bombed with nuclear weapons. Indian doctrine, backed by deployment patterns, explicitly eschews any intent to use nuclear weapons as tools of coercion.

It is hard to see any role for India's nuclear armaments as instruments of defense. India's no-first-use doctrine disavows use of nuclear weapons in response to conventional attacks. Nuclear weapons cannot be used for defense by nuclear-armed rivals whose mutual vulnerability to second-strike retaliatory capability guarantees that any escalation through the nuclear threshold would be mutual national suicide. India's nuclear arsenal offers no defense against a major conventional attack by China, Russia or the U.S. — the only three countries with the *capability* to do so. As for *intent*, Russia is a diplomatic ally and friend of long standing. Relations with the U.S. have warmed to a remarkable degree, including a just concluded high-profile visit by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, which was remarkable for the fact that a person denied a U.S. visa from 2005 until May 2014 was hosted to a state dinner by President Barack Obama. Deepening and broadening bilateral Sino-Indian relations, and cooperation on several major international issues based on converging interests in forums like the group of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS), provide considerable substance, texture and ballast to that relationship today. During his recent visit, Chinese President Xi Jinping signed agreements to invest \$20 billion to upgrade India's woeful infrastructure.

With nuclear weapons being unusable for defense, their sole operational purpose and role is mutual deterrence. Deterrence stability depends on rational decision-makers being always in office on all sides: a shaky precondition. It depends equally critically on there being no rogue launch, human error or system malfunction: an impossibly high bar. Nuclear weapons have failed to stop wars between nuclear and nonnuclear rivals (Korea, Afghanistan, Falklands, Vietnam, 1991 Persian Gulf War).

To believe in deterrence is to argue that Iran should be encouraged, indeed facilitated in getting the bomb in order to contribute to the peace and stability of the Middle East where presently Israel is the only nuclear-armed state. Good luck and good night.

The subcontinent's history since 1998 gives the lie to the then-hopes and expectations, on both sides of the border, that nuclearization would prove to be a largely stabilizing factor.

Powerful domestic constituencies have grown in both countries to identify multiple threats that justify a matching expansion of a highly elastic nuclear posture. The low-cost, low-risk covert war in the shadow of the subcontinent's nuclearization had three attractions for Pakistan: It would weaken India by raising the human and economic costs of Kashmir's occupation; the fear of nuclear escalation would raise the threshold for cross-border Indian retaliatory raids; and it would help internationalize the Kashmir dispute by highlighting the risk of nuclear escalation.

Pakistan has invested in terrorist groups as part of its unconventional inventory against India. In responding to a terrorist attack, any deliberate escalation by India through the nuclear threshold would be extremely high-risk. The development of tactical missiles and battlefield nuclear weapons by the two sides, whose utility is contingent on proximity to battlefields, multiply the risks. India must also live with the nightmare possibility of jihadists getting their hands on Pakistan's nuclear weapons. While obviously more acute for Pakistan, the threat is grave for India also.

Just what is a "credible minimum deterrent" — India's official doctrine — that would dissuade nuclear blackmail and coercion and permit second-strike nuclear retaliation? China and Pakistan are incommensurate in their national power, strategic frames and military capabilities. The requirements of numbers, reach, deployment patterns and locations, and the distribution between land-based, air-launched and sea-borne platforms, are as mutually incompatible between them. That which is credible toward China cannot be the minimum toward Pakistan, and vice versa.

Few analysts would take issue with the claim that currently nonnuclear-armed Germany has a higher status, weight and clout in Europe and the world than nuclear-armed Britain and France. Nuclear brinkmanship earns North Korea neither prestige, power nor friends; nonnuclear-armed South Korea fares better on all three counts.

India does have a higher international profile today than in 1998. This is despite, not because of, nuclear weapons, and rests in its economic performance and information technology credentials.

No serious Indian analyst is likely to claim that Pakistan's profile has risen alongside India's since 1998, despite Islamabad's more focused efforts on expanding, deepening and broadening its nuclear weapons capability.

If India's economy stutters, its social pathologies intensify and multiply and its political system proves incapable of making and implementing hard decisions. The fact that India has nuclear weapons will add to international unease and worries rather than enhance its global stature and international prestige.

If India's economic future is mortgaged to bad governance rooted in populist politics pursued by corrupt politicians, other countries will return India to the basket of benign neglect while offering ritual but empty praise for its rich civilization and culture. Prime Minister Modi at least seems to get this.

This article is based on Ramesh Thakur's recent publication "The Inconsequential Gains and Lasting Insecurities of India's Nuclear Weaponization," International Affairs 90:5 (September 2014).

October 7, 2014

India's nuclear risks and costs

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2014/10/07/commentary/world-commentary/indias-nuclear-risks-and-costs/#.VDQyyBZJn4w>

by Ramesh Thakur

This is the second of a two-part series on India's nuclear weaponization.

A nuclear catastrophe was averted during the Cold War as much owing to good luck as wise management. The number of times that we have come frighteningly close to nuclear holocaust is simply staggering. According to one study by a U.S. nuclear weapon laboratory in 1970, more than 1,200 nuclear weapons were involved in accidents from 1950 to 1968 because of security breaches, lost weapons, failed safety mechanisms or accidents resulting from weapons being dropped or crushed in lifts, etc.

In the 1962 Cuban missile crisis, U.S. strategy was based on intelligence that indicated there were no nuclear warheads in Cuba. In fact there were 162 warheads already stationed there and the local Soviet commander had taken them out of storage to deployed positions for use against an American invasion. Intelligence agencies are necessary even in democratic societies to protect us against quotidian threats, for example wannabe terrorists who will discuss targets and tactics on open international phone lines. But it's amazing how often they fail to forewarn us of the big picture like the erection and fall of the Berlin Wall, the end of the Cold War, 9/11, etc.

Recently declassified documents show there was another near-miss in November 1983, when strategic arsenals were far more lethal on both sides. In response to NATO war games exercise Able Archer, which Moscow mistook to be real, the Soviets came close to launching a full-scale nuclear attack against the West under the misapprehension that a NATO nuclear attack was imminent. And the West was blissfully unaware of this at the time.

On Jan. 21, 1961, a 4-megaton bomb (260 times more powerful than the Hiroshima blast) was one ordinary switch away from detonating over North Carolina; the effects would have covered Washington, Baltimore, Philadelphia and even New York. Days after President John F. Kennedy's inauguration, a B-52 bomber on a routine flight went into an uncontrolled spin. Two hydrogen bombs fell loose over Goldsboro, North Carolina. One, assuming it had been deliberately released over an enemy target, began the detonation process. Three of four fail-safe mechanisms failed and only the final, a simple dynamo-technology low-voltage switch, averted what would have been the greatest disaster in U.S. history with millions of lives at risk.

In addition to close calls based on miscalculations and misperceptions and accidental near misses, the nuclear age has left a trail of grave environmental damage. There is also a significant economic cost.

Nuclear weapons have not permitted any of the states that have them to buy defense on the cheap.

In terms of opportunity costs, heavy military expenditure amounts to stealing from the poor. India's core expenditure on nuclear weapons are around \$4 billion, and the full nuclear costs amount to \$5 billion. Yet nuclear weapons do not help to combat India's real threats of Maoist insurgency, terrorism, pandemics, poverty, illiteracy, malnutrition and corruption.

As demonstrated in the 1999 Kargil war, the possession of nuclear weapons by both sides in a conflict does not rule out either an initial military incursion across a disputed border or a conventional military retaliation. But it did dampen a full-scale conventional attack by India in order to avoid escalating to the nuclear threshold. If India is to retain the option of being able to respond to provocations (border skirmishes, incursions and state-sponsored terrorist attacks) with calibrated use of conventional military power, it must invest still more heavily in conventional military capability than would have been required in the absence of a nuclear overhang in the subcontinent.

In a convergence of Indian military-nuclear thinking with international norms, India's military doctrine has begun to emphasize prompt offensive action with division-sized battle groups upon provocation.

India's maritime strategy also increasingly emphasizes offensive action with power-projection capability

both to the east and west across the Indian Ocean. Indian weapons scientists are working on a successor Agni-VI missile with a 10,000-km range (that is, covering all of China) with a projected test flight date of 2017.

In the absence of an official strategic defense or nuclear posture review, it is hard to discern how India will ensure that a capability meant to deter does not in fact provoke, including additional Chinese assistance to Pakistan's nuclear capabilities. There is the added risk of proliferation to extremist elements through leakage, theft, state collapse and state capture.

Domestically, meanwhile, a nuclear program encourages excessive centralization of political control and obsessive secrecy. Nuclear weapons can lead to the creation of a national security state with a premium on governmental secretiveness, reduced public accountability and increased distance between citizens and government.

Relying on secrecy and obfuscation, a nuclear program undermines democratic accountability and contributes instead to a culture of lies and evasions. Shielding the program from public scrutiny hides the inefficiency, malpractice, mismanagement and dangers — and nuclear technology is unforgiving when things go wrong with grave safety and environmental concerns. Just ask the former residents of Fukushima.

In other words, India is caught in an escalating cycle of increased nuclear and conventional military expenditures with no net gain in defense capability against the most likely threat contingencies.

Internationally India has shifted from being a disarmament champion to a nuclear-armed state. While the former was informed by a strategic vision, the latter has been ad hoc and episodic.

As a disarmament crusader, India was the foremost critic of the Non-Proliferation Treaty-centered “nuclear apartheid” regime. As a non-NPT nuclear-armed state, India has been gradually integrating with the global nuclear orders while hypocritically preaching nuclear abstinence to others like North Korea and Iran. Nuclear weapons confer neither power, prestige nor influence. South Asia's insecurity dilemma has intensified since May 1998.

India still lacks effective deterrent capability against China. History and geography make the India-Pakistan nuclear equation less stable than Cold War U.S.-Soviet deterrence. Nuclear weapons failed to deter Pakistani infiltration and Indian retaliation and escalation in the two-month Kargil war in 1999, and a year-long full military mobilization by both in 2002. Nuclear weapons are not going to help India combat internal insurgency, cross-border terrorism or parasitical corruption.

Nor can nuclear weapons help to solve any of the real problems of poverty, illiteracy and malnutrition. And they are irrelevant to India's security needs against any other country.

While not advocating unilateral nuclear disarmament, such a conclusion should at least encourage India to be a champion of phased, regulated and verifiable global nuclear disarmament governed by a nondiscriminatory nuclear weapons convention.

This would be in keeping with: the legacy of Indian initiatives on nuclear arms control and disarmament, including the Rajiv Gandhi Action Plan of 1988; the fact that India was the most reluctant nuclear weapons possessor of all the nine nuclear-armed states; and its official nuclear doctrine that lists global nuclear disarmament as a national security objective.

With more than 90 percent of the global nuclear weapons arsenal, the U.S. and Russia bear primary and heaviest responsibility for nuclear disarmament. That is no reason for the other nuclear powers to abdicate their responsibility commensurate with their status as nuclear weapons possessor states.

This article is based on Ramesh Thakur's publication, “The Inconsequential Gains and Lasting Insecurities of India's Nuclear Weaponization,” International Affairs 90:5 (September 2014), pp. 1101-24.

US nuclear weapons: "We've lost focus"

November 9, 2014

Foundation of U.S. nuclear weapons system showing cracks

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2014/11/09/world/foundation-of-u-s-nuclear-weapons-system-showing-cracks/#.VF-ko8l5B1v>

by Robert Burns

AP

WASHINGTON – The foundation of America’s nuclear arsenal is fractured, and the government has no clear plan to repair it.

The cracks appear not just in the military forces equipped with nuclear weapons but also in the civilian bureaucracy that controls them, justifies their cost, plans their future and is responsible for explaining a defense policy that says nuclear weapons are at once essential and excessive.

It’s not clear that the government recognizes the full scope of the problem, which has wormed its way to the core of the nuclear weapons business without disturbing bureaucracies fixated on defending their own turf. Nor has it aroused the public, which may think nuclear weapons are relics of the past, if it thinks about them at all.

This is not mainly about the safety of today’s weapons, although the air force’s nuclear missile corps has suffered failures in discipline, training, morale and leadership over the past two years. Just last week the air force fired nuclear commanders at two of its three missile bases for misconduct and disciplined a third commander.

Rather, this is about a broader problem: **The erosion of the government’s ability to manage and sustain its nuclear “enterprise,” the intricate network of machines, brains and organizations that enables America to call itself a nuclear superpower.**

What have been slipping are certain key building blocks — technical expertise, modern facilities and executive oversight on the civilian side, and discipline, morale and accountability on the military side.

The shortfalls are compounded by **tight budgets and what experts call a decline in political support for the nuclear system.** In the absence of a headline-grabbing nuclear accident in recent decades [??????] and receding fears of nuclear war, these problems generally are paid little heed.

The scientific and military capability is arguably the best in the world, but its underpinnings have weakened gradually.

The White House and Congress have paid little attention, allowing the responsible government agencies to “muddle through,” according to a congressional advisory panel. This is the case despite the fact that the U.S. still has thousands of nuclear weapons — more than it says it needs — and is approaching decision points on investing enormous sums to keep the arsenal viable for future generations.

“This lack of attention has resulted in public confusion, congressional distrust and a serious erosion of advocacy, expertise and proficiency in the sustainment” of the nation’s nuclear weapons capabilities, the panel on “Governance of the Nuclear Security Enterprise” said in a report in April that is expected to be updated soon.

The panel was led by retired Adm. Richard Mies, a former commander of U.S. Strategic Command, in charge of all U.S. nuclear forces, and Norman Augustine, a retired chairman of Lockheed Martin Corp.

Nuclear weapons, the panel said, have been “orphaned” by Washington. Although today’s weapons are technologically sound, “there is no affordable, executable (government) vision, plan or program for the future of nuclear weapons capabilities.”

The atrophy gets little public notice because it’s largely hidden.

Some aspects of the problem will emerge with the expected release this month of an in-depth study of “gaps or deficiencies” in the nuclear force that Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel ordered in February. He also asked for immediate and long-term solutions after declaring in January that “something is wrong” in the nuclear force.

Hagel acted in response to a series of stories detailing failed nuclear security inspections, leadership lapses, training gaps and morale problems in the nuclear air force. The navy has since disclosed that a cheating ring operated undetected for at least seven years at a nuclear power training site and that at least 34 sailors were being kicked out for their roles in the long-hidden misconduct.

But the problem goes beyond the military and Hagel’s responsibility for nuclear weapons. It extends to the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA). This office within the Energy Department is in charge of ensuring that nuclear warheads attached to navy and air force missiles and bombs — as well as those in storage — are safe and work properly.

It also administers a network of nuclear weapons plants and nuclear laboratories.

The government splits nuclear management responsibilities between agencies. The Energy Department, through the NNSA, develops, produces and maintains nuclear weapons as well as dismantles and disposes of those that are retired. The Defense Department sets weapons requirements and operates them in the field.

Augustine told Congress last April that the NNSA “is on a trajectory toward crisis,” having “lost credibility and the trust of the national leadership (and the Pentagon) that it deliver needed weapons and nuclear facilities on schedule and on budget.”

Frank Klotz, the head of the NNSA and a former commander of the nuclear air force, says his agency is taking steps to fix its shortcomings. He believes its management of the nuclear weapons stockpile is a “phenomenal achievement,” considering **it has not conducted an underground nuclear test for more than 20 years.**

In an interview with reporters Oct. 29, Klotz did not dispute that the government has allowed cracks to form in the civilian and military underpinnings of its nuclear weapons complex.

“My generation came of age in the Cold War, when nuclear deterrence and the nuclear deterrent force were center stage,” he said. “At the end of the Cold War it was almost as if we had all heaved a sigh of collective relief and said, ‘Thank goodness we don’t have to worry about that anymore.’ . . . Quite frankly, **we lost focus.**”

The nuclear weapons laboratories say they have been losing ground and fear for the future.

Charles F. McMillan, director of the Los Alamos National Laboratory, told a Senate panel in April that the country is spending too little on the science, technology and engineering base that supports the nuclear program.

Congress is supposed to oversee both the military and civilian sides of the nuclear enterprise, but it has shown limited interest in addressing the problems. The most vocal lawmakers on nuclear weapons issues are usually those seeking to protect home-state interests — nuclear missile bases, nuclear weapons labs and the like.

Those who see nuclear weapons as a necessary deterrent to attack from other nuclear-armed countries worry about the looming obsolescence of the current Cold War-era arsenal and about the jaw-dropping cost — of up to \$1 trillion — of replacing it with a new generation of weapons and their support systems.

“Unaffordable,” is the blunt conclusion by a panel of defense experts who reviewed the Pentagon latest defense plan.

John Hamre, president of the Center for Strategic and International Studies and a former deputy defense secretary, says post-Cold War decisions that downgraded nuclear weapons as a national priority may come back to haunt the U.S., in light of efforts by several countries to expand or begin building nuclear arsenals.

“It was always the backdrop of the competition with the Soviet Union that undergirded the nuclear enterprise. Now the Russians are coming back, the Chinese are expanding their inventory, and we are on the rim of a potential cascade of nuclear weapon states,” Hamre said. “But the American establishment is in serious decline.”

Conference on the humanitarian impacts of nuclear weapons

November 8, 2014

U.S. is first nuclear power to join conference on impact of atomic arms

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2014/11/08/world/politics-diplomacy-world/u-s-is-first-nuclear-power-to-join-conference-on-impact-of-atomic-arms/#.VF-lIMl5B1s>

Kyodo

WASHINGTON – The United States will attend the **third Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons in Vienna next month**, the State Department said Friday, making it the first of the world’s five recognized nuclear powers to do so.

Ahead of the review conference for the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty next April and May, participation in the Vienna conference will allow the United States to show its engagement in nuclear disarmament leading toward a world without nuclear weapons.

Previous conferences were held in Oslo in March 2013 and Nayarit, Mexico, in February this year.

None of the five nations that are allowed to possess nuclear weapons under the NPT attended either of the previous conferences. The other four nations — Britain, France, China and Russia — have yet to announce whether they will attend the Vienna conference.

Pope Francis on nuclear weapons

December 2, 2014

Pope Francis criticizes stalled effort toward abolition of nuclear weapons

http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/social_affairs/AJ201412020013

By HIROSHI ISHIDA/ Correspondent

ABOARD THE PAPAL PLANE--Pope Francis criticized the current global situation on Nov. 30 for failing to make progress toward the abolition of nuclear weapons, in what he called the misuse of atomic power, a God-given gift of creativity.

In a news conference held on his return flight from a visit to Turkey, he told a group of reporters from Japanese media organizations, including The Asahi Shimbun, that mankind has learned no lessons from Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

The pontiff, who represents the Catholic Church, made the remark when asked about next year marking the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II and the tragedies of the atomic bombings of the two Japanese cities.

Francis also expressed anxieties over ongoing wars and conflicts in the Middle East, Africa and other regions, saying that mankind is in a "piecemeal World War III."

As for the description, he pointed out placing importance on money rather than human beings has produced political and economic problems and hostilities that exist behind the wars.

In particular, he criticized the arms industry that profits from conflicts, saying that it has become one of the most influential industries.

Regarding nuclear weapons, he looked back on the 1945 atomic bombings.

He said that God gave the gift of creativity to ignorant mankind. Civilization achieved the harnessing of atomic power, which can be used for peaceful purposes. But mankind instead has used it as a device to kill others, he said.

Even after the atomic bombings, mankind has continued to possess nuclear weapons. As for the current situation, he said that such a civilization is a new form of ignorance and should be called "terminal."

Francis said that if a terminal event occurs as a result, mankind has to start from scratch again in the same way as Hiroshima and Nagasaki did.

US at the Vienna table

December 7, 2014

INTERVIEW/ William C. Potter: By joining Vienna, U.S. splits nuclear powers on humanitarian impact on nuclear weapons

<http://ajw.asahi.com/article/views/opinion/AJ201412070011>

By MASATO TAINAKA/ Staff Writer

The third international conference on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons will be held in Vienna, starting Dec. 8. The U.S. decision to attend is seen as vital to promoting nuclear disarmament. William C. Potter, director of the Monterey Institute of International Studies, says the United States--which host Austria regards as key to making the conference a success--made "the right decision" now that a majority of countries endorse more action with respect to the humanitarian consequences of using nuclear weapons.

Excerpts from the interview follow:

Question: I interviewed Austrian Ambassador of Disarmament Alexander Kmentt when he visited Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August. He indicated that if the United States joined Vienna, it would be a success. But he carefully avoided my question about the Nuclear Weapons Convention and a legally binding framework, which was discussed and concluded in the chair's summary in the previous Mexico "humanitarian" Conference in February. So, what is the implication of this?

William C. Potter: What I do know is that Kmentt and the Austrian Foreign Ministry tried to be as encouraging as possible, to all parties, including the United States, and so I think the Americans felt that

they were being given due consideration, that their concerns about the agenda were addressed, and ultimately, I think, they decided that it was better to be at the table rather than not, particularly following--if you just do the numerical count--at the United Nations General Assembly First Committee meeting in October, where 155 countries joined the New Zealand statement, and another 20 joined the Australian statement. You know, that's more than 170 countries! There are not that many more countries in the world!

So, it's clear that the overwhelming majority of states endorse more action with respect to humanitarian consequences.

But I think the argument I have made, that the United States should not be afraid of the issues that are being discussed and is in fact also very concerned about many of these issues as they serve U.S. national interests, particularly as they are to be addressed at the 2015 U.N. NPT Review Conference, means that it is one of those nuclear weapons states that shows that it can participate in a conference dealing with the question of the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons.

If the French and the Russians don't want to attend the Vienna conference, let them stick their necks out and get hammered by the non-nuclear weapons states. But, there's no reason for the U.S. to join that kind of a coalition. I mean, the remnants of the P5 (five nuclear powers under the NPT comprises the United States, Russia, Britain, France and China) solidarity are hard to find at the moment, and so while, in 2013, when the U.S. might have still hoped for some follow-on, bilateral, nuclear negotiations, it didn't want to antagonize the Russians over their participation; today, there's no such hope.

Q: To get back to what Kmentt said actually, that it would be in the U.S. interest to join the conference. Probably it is from the high moral ground.

A: Well, it's not the high moral ground. I don't think it's just the high moral ground. Let me state this in a different sort of way. The United States makes the case to all relevant parties in the Middle East that they should not be afraid of participating in consultations dealing with a WMD-free zone in the Middle East (which were agreed upon at the 2010 NPT Review Conference, but have yet to be held), and that they should all participate in those consultations because it's in their interest to be at the table.

I think that's a very compelling argument, but if it applies to parties in the Middle East with respect to the WMD-free zone, it also applies to the nuclear weapons states with respect to humanitarian consequences. So I think, generally, boycotts don't work. They are counter-productive, and you're better to be at the negotiating table. It's not really a "negotiating" forum. But you can influence the discussion. You can influence the conclusions that are drawn. And, for that reason, I think the United States made the right decision.

Q: The U.S. State Department announced that it will not join the debate on disarmament in Vienna, and also Kmentt avoided being drawn on this item on the agenda. But under the general debate, countries can argue anything, including the NWC. So, how do they deal with it, the U.S.?

A: You know, debate, I think, is probably--well, who knows what will happen? I mean, I have attended one of these meetings in the past in Mexico. Much of it, they were kind of scholarly and scientific presentations. There was not a great deal of debate; there were various interventions when states had a chance and NGOs had a chance to speak.

I think, unfortunately, at the last meeting the chair did not adequately or accurately capture what had been agreed upon, or suggested things that were agreed upon, which had really not been. I don't think it accurately reflected the discussion. I have lots of friends on the Mexican side, but I just don't think it was a helpful chair summary.

And the Americans, I think, will work hard to make sure that nothing like that happens in Vienna. I know the Austrian team well and they're very professional, and I think that they will not misrepresent the discussion that takes place. It's not going to be a negotiation.

The big question in my mind is not what happens in Vienna, because Vienna is not the end of this process; it's what happens following Vienna. How does the issue that will be addressed at Vienna flow into the U.N. NPT Review Conference, beginning in April next year? And how does the Review Conference capture the strong support that almost certainly will be expressed in Vienna? And where does it go from there? What happens next?

So, there's been some talk about South Africa possibly hosting a conference of humanitarian consequences. But, at some point, you are going to have to address the really difficult issues and that is "Where does this concern about humanitarian impact--how does that impact on different negotiations?" The Conference on Disarmament in Geneva is not going anywhere. The nuclear weapons states certainly don't want any negotiation outside of Geneva. It's not clear that you'll be able to forge consensus on anything, at the next Review Conference, for a variety of reasons. This will be a major issue but not the only major issue.

So, there's a real question of what will happen. And there are going to be some states, probably a lot of states, that would like to push for a ban treaty. There will be others that will want to talk about a nuclear weapons convention. There will be others that will argue that a building block approach needs to be pursued.

Q: Yes. Japan promotes a building block approach.

A: Well, Japan among others. But, it's not clear how these countries will divide up and what kind of a path forward they will chart. This road map, where does it go?

So I think, actually, one of the more interesting approaches would be for countries to take quite seriously the proposal made on behalf of the New Agenda Coalition (the NAC comprises Ireland, Mexico, New Zealand, South Africa, Egypt and Brazil), at the last NPT prepcom in April, which looks at a variety of approaches that need to be considered, without recommending--there are four basic approaches, one of which is "other"--four basic approaches that are recommended for consideration, and they don't rule out alternatives. And I think that kind of an examination could be useful.

Q: I see. I covered the 2000 NPT Review Conference and I recall that the NAC was very, very powerful. It was successful in achieving "an unequivocal undertaking" of nuclear disarmament from the five nuclear powers. So, will the NAC return to the NPT? I mean, as a powerful force.

A: Well, the NAC hasn't disappeared. I think that it probably will be more pronounced in 2015 than it has been for quite some time. But whether it will be able to serve in this bridge-building capacity is another question.

The environment is difficult, but the environment was difficult in 2000 also. We had, then, the ABM Treaty issue that was the big issue.

So, the NAC may play a role. The NPDI (Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative; comprises 12 non-nuclear weapon countries including Japan) could be helpful--although it doesn't really bridge the political groupings in the same fashion that the New Agenda Coalition does. But it's also going to be a question of how flexible states are, and there are other wild cards. I mean, it's not just the Middle East. It's not just humanitarian consequences.

I would be surprised if Ukraine doesn't play a major role. I was actually surprised that it didn't play a greater role at the prepcom, but there was still the hope for some kind of accommodation. But, it could spill over in all different kinds of ways, whether on a discussion of security assurance, the Budapest

Memorandum, nuclear security, nuclear safety or the whole debate over nuclear alliances. All of these things may come up. Plus, it is a very emotional issue. So, personalities matter and they can blow up. So, I'm not sure how countries will respond in the debate.

Q: I would like to ask about Japan's ambivalent position, as a U.S. ally. Japan, as you know, supported both the New Zealand and Australian joint statements with regard to the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons at the U.N. General Assembly First Committee in October.

A: The only other country to do so, I think, was Finland.

Q: Tokyo supports Washington's "step-by-step" approach or gradual nuclear disarmament. Also, Tokyo must take care of the Hiroshima-Nagasaki agenda of humanitarian discourse. So, what would you recommend to the Japanese Foreign Ministry in terms of managing the whole agenda to promote nuclear disarmament in the coming Vienna and New York or the U.N. NPT Review Conference next year?

A: I think it appears very odd for the only country that actually experienced, directly, nuclear weapons use to be indecisive in terms of the initiative that they support here.

To go back to the question about what to advise your foreign minister, I think that Japan could confidently support the New Zealand language (which focused on the humanitarian aspect rather than security aspect), because to support both is to, basically, highlight the fact that you're undecided yourself, and it sends, I think, the wrong signal. I think you would be better off supporting one or the other. To support both I don't think really shows clarity of thought.

And I can make the argument as a Japanese diplomat which of the two that I might prefer.

I think that one can gain the assurances that you want from the United States, without regard to the initiatives that you support here, and so my own view is that the strongest measures of assurance with respect to alliances have very little to do with nuclear assurances, and with the presence of nuclear weapons. I'm less concerned about what the Japanese or any other American ally says or does with respect to the humanitarian consequence issues, and the credibility of the nuclear umbrella than other factors.

But I know it's a difficult and a highly politically-charged issue, and I don't have much confidence that Japan is going to change its position any time soon. You can make arguments on both sides of that. I don't think whatever the Japanese do on that issue is going to have much effect, in terms of the relationship between Japan and the United States. It will be determined by other considerations.

Q: But do you think that this humanitarian discourse or initiative will provide more momentum to promote nuclear disarmament, or become a stumbling block?

A: Well, the problem is you can only have so many humanitarian consequences conferences. It has to lead someplace. I have been pleased that it has generated greater support among civil society and the NGO world, and I think that's a good thing. I think shining the spotlight on this issue sometimes can encourage states to act.

I think, also, the issue becomes even more important, given the deterioration in U.S.-Russian relations. In the previous Mexico meeting in February, one of the most interesting issues discussed was with these near-misses. You know, where these were not technical malfunctions but political miscalculations, we came precariously close to unintended use of nuclear weapons.

And the potential, I think, for those miscalculations and mistakes grows exponentially with the nosedive in U.S.-Russian relations. The Russians are now becoming far more assertive in their flights over or close to U.S. and NATO territory. We are engaged in various military maneuvers that the Russians regard as provocative. We also have this same situation with the Chinese.

So, the probability of a mistake just grows. The more that we conduct these exercises, and the more we are, probably, inclined to infer intent from what may be an accident. So, I worry a lot about this, and I think focusing on the consequences of these mistakes is very important at this moment in time.

Q: Right. That's what Kmentt said, that he would discuss it, in Vienna. One more question about human discourse and President Barack Obama. We witnessed the historical defeat in the midterm election. I didn't see anybody wearing the "Yes we can" T-shirt in the United States recently. But, Japanese, and especially Hiroshima and Nagasaki people, still hope Obama will do something for nuclear disarmament.

A: Right.

Q: Remembering the Prague speech. Would you see any possibility that Obama will visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki during the remainder of his tenure, over the next two years?

A: I can't anticipate that. I think it would be a good idea. Personally, had someone asked me, I would have recommended that President Obama fly to Japan after the Fukushima nuclear reactor accident. I think that gesture would have been far more powerful than any nuclear promises. That is, nuclear alliance promises. To show that we are, kind of, "with you." So, I don't discount the symbolic importance of his travel there. My view is that, strange as it may seem to some, I don't think we're ever going to find an administration that is more sympathetic to nuclear disarmament. I don't think any president is going to be as committed to this as President Obama, and with the folks that he has at Defense and at State, it's going to be very difficult to find a team that's more committed.

But, the president finds himself in a very difficult international and domestic political environment, where you have a Congress that opposes everything that he does, and an international environment that's not much more encouraging.

You know, up until the crisis over the Russian annexation of Crimea and the like, I actually was hopeful that, perhaps, one would see some positive movement on the nuclear disarmament front, through concerns that were of a bipartisan nature about the defense budget. So, I thought that there might be some changes in nuclear force posture and nuclear strategy. I'm not really that interested, personally, in the numbers, but I think it's questions of the conditions of use. You know, the force posture.

And you saw some signs of even fiscally conservative Republicans joining Democrats on this issue. Unfortunately, after Ukraine, all of that is, I think, just wishful thinking.

Q: Some people in Washington, I mean scientists, have suggested that Obama could decide about the hair trigger alert with ICBMs. He could shut those facilities without any cooperation from the Republicans.

A: There are some things that can be done. I mean, the dealerting issue is one of those areas.

I was actually thinking more in terms of a more significant change in the force posture. I mean, there had been--we produced a study on the so-called "trillion-dollar budget," which has received a lot of attention. And it was an attempt to look at the amount of money that was likely to be spent for force modernization. And when we did this study at the end of last year, it really looked as if this might have some traction. But right now it doesn't look very encouraging.

But, you know, I think this is an area where the president may decide to act more unilaterally, because he doesn't have a lot to lose at the moment. Although there will be those who are concerned about this being a bad issue for the Democrats. But, let's see.

And Iran will be ... very consequential (about) what happens here ...

That's a big risk for him too, but it doesn't just require the president. I think that you have a situation, now, where the negotiators, led by the Iranian foreign minister, would like a deal. The problem is how do they sell it to their political constituents, bosses, and then how we sell it to the U.S. Congress. That's going to be the hard sell.

Q: That's the arms control side. But, with regard to Japan, it pays more attention to the humanitarian discourse, as well as the reconciliation aspect between the U.S. and Japan.

A: Right.

Q: 2015 will mark the 70th anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Don't you think that it's time for the U.S. to discuss this discourse? Already 20 years have passed since 1995 when the Smithsonian proposed putting the Enola Gay on display, but it didn't happen. Since then, more and more veterans and hibakusha have passed away. Surely it's time for Americans and Japanese to calmly discuss this issue?

A: I mean, the problem, again, is that everything in Washington is so politicized. I just don't have a very well-informed view.

So, the one other issue that I really wanted to address, where I've worked most closely with Japan, has to do with disarmament and nonproliferation education. And, in fact, the whole initiative, both in the NPT context and the U.N. context, came out of a set of recommendations made by the secretary-general's Advisory Board on Disarmament Affairs. And I was the author of the study that was subsequently the basis for the U.N. General Assembly resolution.

So, I think an area where there is a potential for Japan to do more and also to engage more closely with the U.S. in a fashion that would promote both sides' interest in disarmament, and nonproliferation, that's with respect to education and training.

And the problem has been that it's been very difficult to get the United States and the other nuclear weapons states to join in various resolutions and working papers that have been discussed in the NPT context. So, I would hope that this would be an issue that would receive more attention by the U.S. government. But I think in order for that to happen, Japan will also have to engage with the Americans. And one of my concerns is that this has tended to be--this maybe is too esoteric--but it has tended to be worked on in Geneva, and it needs to be more focused on Washington and Tokyo.

Dr. William Potter is Sam Nunn and Richard Lugar professor of Nonproliferation Studies and director of the James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies at the Monterey Institute of International Studies. He has served on numerous committees of the U.S. National Academy of Sciences and for five years was a member of the U.N. secretary-general's Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters.

Hibakusha at Vienna conference

December 9, 2014

Hibakusha shares horrific account from Hiroshima at Vienna conference on nuclear weapons

http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/social_affairs/AJ201412090057

By TAKASHI OKUMA/ Staff Writer

VIENNA--A woman who survived the atomic bombing of Hiroshima at the age of 13 gave a spellbinding account and powerful statement at an international conference on nuclear weapons here, sharing her horrific experiences with attendees.

"Today, 69 years later, people are still dying from the delayed effects of one atomic bomb," said Setsuko Thurlow, 82, a resident of Canada, at the Third Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons on Dec. 8. "Humanity and nuclear weapons cannot coexist indefinitely."

Representatives from the United States and Britain joined their counterparts from 155 countries at the two-day conference that began on Dec. 8, the first time either nation has attended the sessions. Chinese experts were also in attendance.

Thurlow said delivering a speech to drive home the importance of a nuclear-free world at the conference was an opportunity she has long been looking forward to.

"We hibakusha became convinced that no human being should ever have to repeat our experience of the inhumane, immoral, and cruel atomic bombing, and that our mission is to warn the world about the reality of the nuclear threat and to help people understand the illegality and ultimate evil of nuclear weapons," she said.

Born in Hiroshima in 1932, Thurlow was a witness to the destruction unleashed by the nuclear blast on Aug. 6, 1945. She was working in the city at that time after being mobilized for a student work unit.

Thurlow survived after being pulled out of the rubble of a collapsed building, but not her older sister and her nephew. They were so badly burned that they died from their injuries.

In 1954, Thurlow moved to the United States on a study program. She made her residence in Toronto after marrying a Canadian in 1955.

Since then, Thurlow has campaigned against nuclear weapons by recounting her experiences in English and by organizing photo exhibitions in a large number of cities.

Thurlow said she has felt discomfort whenever world leaders discussed the nuclear issue only from a perspective of deterrence.

But she said she sees some progress in the movement toward a world without nuclear weapons as, at long last, global attention has begun focusing on the humanitarian aspect.

"It gives me great satisfaction that these conferences have renewed the focus on the humanitarian dimension of nuclear weapons, the fundamental issue, yet long neglected by the shifting of the world's attention to the doctrine of deterrence in the name of national and international security," she said.

In concluding her address, she expressed her determination to turn Vienna into a landmark venue where opponents of nuclear weapons begin negotiating a ban treaty toward their objective.

"Here in Vienna let us move forward, courageously, by concretizing our vision so that we can make the 70th anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki the appropriate milestone to achieve our goal: to prohibit and eliminate nuclear weapons," she said.

Meanwhile, Toshio Sano, head of the Permanent Delegation of Japan to the Conference on Disarmament, sparked controversy the same day as he called for a more positive view on nuclear weapons at the conference.

The diplomat was referring to an opinion reaffirmed at the session that disastrous consequences, which the global community could not deal with, would follow a nuclear blast. He called the belief too pessimistic.

But anti-nuclear groups took exception with his comments, saying such a remark should not come from a representative from Japan, which experienced the disastrous consequences of the 1945 atomic bombings. December 8, 2014

Nuclear impact conference opens in Vienna

<http://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/english/news/nuclear.html>

Dec. 8, 2014 - Updated 21:37 UTC+1

Delegates from nearly 160 countries gathered in Vienna on Monday to discuss the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons.

The third international conference devoted to the issue drew a record number of attendees, including nuclear powers Britain and the United States for the first time.

Participants will examine the use of nuclear weapons and discuss their humanitarian consequences.

Hiroshima bombing survivor Setsuko Thurlow said the explosion changed her beloved hometown into a wasteland in an instant.

She said nobody else should have to go through that horrific experience. She said now is the time to create a legal framework to ban nuclear weapons.

Delegates at previous meetings discussed a treaty to ban nuclear weapons.

A US representative said the most effective way to remove the threat of nuclear arms is through realistic and gradual disarmament. The representative said the US is opposed to a ban.

The delegates will hold a session for open discussions on Tuesday.

Nuclear deterrence means preparing for nuclear war

December 14, 2014

Nuclear arms risks — a reminder

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2014/12/14/editorials/nuclear-arms-risks-reminder/#.VI2SXnt1Cic>

International efforts toward eliminating nuclear weapons in recent years have come to focus on the devastating consequences their use can have on humanity. The third Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons was held on Dec. 8 and 9 in Vienna, following the first conference in Oslo in March 2013 and the second gathering in Nayarit in Mexico in February 2014.

The Vienna conference was unable to come up with a concrete timetable to get rid of nuclear arms, discussions at the meeting helped deepen understanding among participants of “the consequences and the actual risks posed by nuclear weapons,” according to the statement issued by Sebastian Kurz, Austria’s minister for foreign affairs and integration, who chaired the conference.

The meeting underscored all the more the need for both nuclear powers and nonnuclear states to make serious efforts to make the world free of the devastating weapons whose effects will put victims in affliction for decades to come.

The chair’s summation of the discussions by delegates from 158 nations, the United Nations, the Red Cross movement, civic organizations and academia stressed that the “scope, scale and interrelationship of the humanitarian consequences caused by a nuclear weapon detonation are catastrophic and more complex than commonly understood. These consequences can be large-scale and potentially irreversible.”

More than five years have passed since U.S. President Barack Obama put forward his vision of creating a world without nuclear weapons in his April 2009 speech in Prague. But little progress for nuclear disarmament has since been made, despite the signing of a new nuclear arms reduction treaty between the United States and Russia.

Both countries are modernizing their nuclear weapons. Members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and Japan still attach importance to the U.S. nuclear umbrella. China, Pakistan and India are bolstering their nuclear arsenal, and North Korea continues to push for its nuclear weapons program. Thus it is important for all the countries to heed what the Vienna conference chair's statement said: "As long as nuclear weapons exist, there remains the possibility of a nuclear weapon explosion.

"Even if the probability is considered low, given the catastrophic consequences of a nuclear weapon detonation, the risk is unacceptable." It also pointed out that "There are many circumstances in which nuclear weapons could be used in view of international conflicts and tensions."

The statement noted that the risks of "accidental, unauthorized or intentional use of nuclear weapons" increase over time. It pointed to such factors as "the vulnerability of nuclear command and control networks to human error and cyber attacks, the maintaining of nuclear arsenals on high levels of alert, forward deployment and their modernization."

The statement makes clear the negative stance toward the idea of nuclear deterrence, which is behind the stockpiling of nuclear weapons: **"As nuclear deterrence entails preparing for nuclear war, the risk of nuclear weapon use is real."**

The U.S. and the United Kingdom, both nuclear weapons states under the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, attended the conference for the first time — itself a meaningful development.

But while the chair's statement said the "only assurance against the risk of a nuclear weapon detonation is the total elimination of nuclear weapons," the U.S. expressed opposition to a treaty banning nuclear arms, although it said its commitment to creating a nuclear weapons-free world is firm.

The U.K. also opposed prohibiting nuclear weapons at this moment or setting up a timetable for their elimination from security viewpoint.

Reflecting the divisions among participants, the statement noted that while many delegations recognized that "the only way" to guarantee security for all is "through the total elimination of nuclear weapons and their prohibition," a number of delegations said "a step-by-step approach was the most effective and practical way to achieve nuclear disarmament." The U.S., U.K. and Japan were among the latter group. The speech made by a Japanese delegate followed the policy line of the U.S. and U.K., and would not go beyond the bounds of the idea of nuclear deterrence.

On the other hand, Setsuko Thurlow, who was exposed to the atomic bombing of Hiroshima at the age of 13 and now lives in Canada, talked about her experience and suffering. She asked how long the world will continue to allow the nuclear powers to threaten lives on Earth and called for starting work immediately toward a nuclear arms ban treaty.

Referring to the attendance of Thurlow and other survivors of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki atomic bombings at the conference, the chair's statement said "their presence and contributions exemplified the unspeakable suffering caused to ordinary civilians by nuclear weapons."

As the 70th anniversary of the nuclear attacks on the two Japanese cities approaches, it is high time that Japan worked out its own idea for eliminating nuclear weapons and presented it to the international community to rouse broad-based discussions for the goal.

Although Japan relies on the nuclear umbrella of its security ally, it should not shy away from the duty of fulfilling the task as the only nation in history that suffered nuclear attacks.

Pope Francis' message to the conference deserves heeding from all the nations, especially nuclear powers and states that rely on nuclear umbrella as a key pillar of their security. He said, **"Nuclear deterrence and the threat of mutually assured destruction cannot be the basis for an ethics of fraternity and peaceful coexistence among peoples and states."**

Japan and all other nations should seriously take his message as well as the risks pointed out in the chair's statement, and put together their brains to develop concrete steps for creating a world free of nuclear weapons.

No country can cope with nuclear war

December 15, 2014

Reducing the global threat posed by nuclear weapons

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2014/12/15/commentary/world-commentary/reducing-the-global-threat-posed-by-nuclear-weapons/#.VI8713t1Cic>

by Ramesh Thakur

In an open letter to Austrian Foreign Minister Sebastian Kurz on Dec. 5, more than 120 current and former senior political, military and diplomatic leaders from 46 countries in five continents affirmed strong support for the Vienna Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, called on governments to state emphatically that **any use of a nuclear weapon anywhere on Earth would have catastrophic human consequences for the whole world, and laid out an ambitious agenda for action coming out of the conference.**

Signatories to the letter include a former president, six former prime ministers, six former U.N. undersecretaries general, a former NATO secretary general and 36 former foreign and defense ministers. They call the Vienna conference an “opportunity for all states, whether they possess nuclear weapons or not, to work together in a joint enterprise to identify, understand, prevent, manage and eliminate the risks associated with these **indiscriminate and inhumane weapons.**”

From Asia the list of 30 signatories includes three former prime ministers (Malcolm Fraser, Australia, and Jim Bolger and Sir Geoffrey Palmer, New Zealand); five former defense and foreign ministers (including Gareth Evans and Robert Hill, Australia, and Yoriko Kawaguchi, Japan); two former U.N. under-secretaries general for disarmament (including Nobuyasu Abe, Japan); two former military chiefs and two former foreign secretaries (vice ministers).

By any standards, that is an impressive list. The Asian members are particularly concerned because, while all countries with nuclear weapons are busy modernizing and upgrading them, this continent is home to the four countries that are still adding to their nuclear warhead stockpiles (China, India, North Korea and Pakistan).

Asia is also considered by most nuclear strategists to be the least unlikely setting for the next use of nuclear weapons.

Consider, for example, four propositions: First, no one in the world — not the governments or peoples of India and Pakistan nor any outsiders — can be confident that there will be not be a repeat of the terrorist attack on Mumbai in 2008 with clear links back to Pakistan.

Second, should that happen, no one can be confident that India will not carry out some military retaliation against Pakistan.

Third, if India does conduct a military strike on or in Pakistan, no one could be certain that India and Pakistan will not fight another war.

And, fourth, if they have another war, no one could be confident that the conflict would not quickly escalate to the use of nuclear weapons.

So what relevance does the humanitarian impacts initiative have for such a scenario? Simply this: **No country in the world individually, nor all of them collectively and with the help of international organizations, can cope with the humanitarian emergency caused by a nuclear war. We just do not have that sort of capacity.**

All the best calculations show that **even a limited regional war between India and Pakistan in which they used just a fraction of their nuclear warheads could wreak havoc in global crop production and food distribution networks, killing up to 1 billion people worldwide.**

The letter from global leaders is a joint initiative developed following a recent meeting in Buenos Aires of the Global Networks Forum, the regional leadership networks coordinated by the Nuclear Threat Initiative (NTI).

In the letter, the leaders “believe it is essential for governments to state emphatically that the use of a nuclear weapon anywhere on Earth would have catastrophic human consequences.”

They accordingly **call for global efforts (1) to identify and reduce nuclear risks that “are underestimated or insufficiently understood by world leaders”; (2) raise public awareness; and (3) improve readiness to prepare for the worst — a nuclear incident anywhere around the world.**

The leaders comprise a growing global network of voices united to reduce the threat posed by nuclear weapons. The Global Networks Forum includes the Asia Pacific Leadership Network (APLN), the European Leadership Network (ELN), Latin American Leadership Network (LALN) and the North American Nuclear Security Leadership Council (NSLC).

Building on the seminal work of Henry Kissinger, William Perry, Sam Nunn and George Shultz — four heavyweights from the U.S. strategic community with a keen appreciation of the need for strong national defenses but also the risks of nuclear weapons — since 2007, the steps the global leaders propose include:

- Improved crisis-management arrangements in conflict hot spots and regions of tension around the world.
- Urgent action to lower the prompt-launch status of existing nuclear stockpiles — Russia and the U.S. hold around 1,800 nuclear weapons between them, ready to fire within 30 minutes;
- New measures to improve the security of nuclear weapons and related materials; and renewed efforts to tackle the increasing threat of proliferation from state and nonstate actors.

Awareness of the grave humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons has been growing steeply. In March 2013 Norway hosted a Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons attended by representatives from 127 countries as well as several U.N. organizations, the Red Cross and civil society.

A second conference, hosted by Mexico last February, attracted the participation of 146 countries. It addressed the consequences of any nuclear detonation in areas such as public health, humanitarian assistance, the economy, development and environmental issues, climate change, food security and risk management.

The Vienna conference concluded Dec. 8-9 was the third in the series, and the first to be attended by two (United States and United Kingdom) of the five nuclear weapon states (China, France and Russia being the other three) who previously boycotted Oslo and Mexico.

The movement has also gained strength at the United Nations. The almost indescribable horror associated with any use of nuclear weapons informed the very first resolution of the U.N. General Assembly in 1946 and has been a recurring theme ever since.

A U.N. General Assembly statement on the subject last year was signed by 125 countries. By October this year, support for the New Zealand-led humanitarian consequences statement had swelled to 155 U.N. member states. Regrettably Australia was not among them.

Professor Ramesh Thakur, director of the Center for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament, is head of the Asia Pacific Leadership Network secretariat. He participated in the Buenos Aires meeting of the different global networks.

Nothing "positive" about nuclear arms

December 20, 2014

Nagasaki mayor, anti-nuke groups protest envoy's remark about nuclear arms

http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/social_affairs/AJ201412200039

THE ASAHI SHIMBUN

NAGASAKI--A Japanese diplomat who called for a "positive" perspective on dealing with a nuclear catastrophe continues to face a barrage of criticism.

Nagasaki Mayor Tomihisa Taue said the remark by Toshio Sano at an international conference on nuclear weapons in Vienna earlier this month undermines global efforts to outlaw nuclear arms as inhumane weapons.

Sano, head of the Permanent Delegation of Japan to the Conference on Disarmament, sparked controversy at the Vienna Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons on Dec. 8-9. Touching upon a panelist's view that humankind could not deal with the disastrous consequences of a nuclear blast, Sano said such a belief was "a little pessimistic."

"(Sano's remark) runs counter to the direction of the conference discussion," Taue said at a Dec. 18 news conference. "It really is a shame."

Mitsugi Moriguchi, a 78-year-old member of the hibakusha group Nagasaki no Shogen no Kai, also was upset by Sano's comment.

"I was outraged," he said. "He must be commenting without detailed knowledge of the damage actually done."

The atomic bomb survivors group sent a protest letter to Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida and other officials on Dec. 16.

"(Sano's comments) are based on the premise that nuclear arms can be used," the letter read.

Sano spoke up at a session on Dec. 8 in reference to the view that the impact of a nuclear detonation is so catastrophic that no nations or international organizations are capable of providing appropriate relief to deal with the aftermath.

The ambassador characterized the opinion as "a little pessimistic" and called on the chair of the conference to look at the issue from a "positive" perspective.

But representatives from Austria, the chair of the conference, presented a summary that read: "No state or international body could address in an adequate manner the immediate humanitarian emergency or long-

term consequences caused by a nuclear weapon detonation in a populated area, nor provide adequate assistance to those affected. Such capacity is unlikely ever to exist.”

The summary's point is consistent with summaries of previous conferences on the same subject in Norway and Mexico, and is the basis for nations of the world calling for a ban on nuclear weapons under international law.

After the session, Sano told reporters that what he meant by his remark is that nations or international organizations should study possible assistance measures or develop capabilities to assist the affected. “If you go without protective gear (to the affected nation), you will be exposed to radiation,” he said. “But if you wear (protective gear), you would be able to do many things.”

Five additional hibakusha organizations in Nagasaki also sent joint protest letters to Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and Kishida.

Hideo Tsuchiyama, a former president of Nagasaki University who was involved in treating victims as a medical student, said, “It is beyond understanding that he bothered to speak up in the conference that there are ways to address (a nuclear catastrophe).”

Immediately after the Dec. 8 session, anti-nuclear groups took exception to Sano's remark, saying it was unworthy of a representative from Japan, which experienced the disastrous consequences of the 1945 atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

(This article was written by Shohei Okada and Shoko Rikimaru.)

Hibakushas' voices still ignored

December 22, 2014

EDITORIAL: Japan's anti-nuke diplomacy needs hibakusha's viewpoint

<http://ajw.asahi.com/article/views/editorial/AJ201412220025>

For nearly seven decades since the end of World War II, survivors of the 1945 atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki have been calling for a world without nuclear weapons. But their voices are still ignored, not by the international community but by the Japanese government.

After so many years, the government's policy still doesn't clearly reflect their viewpoint.

The Vienna Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons on Dec. 8-9 brought to the fore many related challenges.

The conference, the third on this theme, highlighted the problem of significant differences in positions and views concerning key issues between atomic bomb survivors, or hibakusha, and the Japanese government. There is rapidly growing international support for the view that nuclear weapons are inhumane and should be eliminated. But the Japanese government's stance toward the issue remains equivocal. It sometimes even shows signs of trying to buck the international trend.

It is assumed that the Japanese government has been pursuing the goal of the elimination of nuclear arms in its disarmament diplomacy in recent years. It should incorporate more of the voices of hibakusha into its diplomatic efforts for the cause.

At the Vienna conference, the rift between hibakusha and the Japanese government was reflected in the reactions of the audience to the remarks made by both sides.

Two atomic bomb survivors and Yasuyoshi Komizo, secretary-general of Mayors for Peace, who traveled from Hiroshima to Vienna to attend the conference, resolutely called for progress toward a global ban on nuclear arms. They received enthusiastic applause.

But Toshio Sano, head of the Permanent Delegation of Japan to the Conference on Disarmament, made remarks that stood in sharp contrast with the passionate calls for the elimination of nuclear arms.

On the first day of the conference, Sano stunned many attendants when he, referring to a panelist's view that humankind could not deal with the disastrous consequences of a nuclear blast, said such a belief was "a little pessimistic."

Sano later told reporters that what he meant by his remark was that nations or international organizations should consider enhancing relief measures for victims included in past United Nations resolutions.

But the purpose of the conference was to promote the international perception that the consequences of nuclear explosions are far more devastating than previously thought and actually impossible to deal with. This is the view that Japan also confirmed in the past two conferences on the issue.

In its official statement issued on the second day of the conference, Japan didn't reiterate the point made by Sano in his controversial remark. But Japan's statement only repeated its traditional position that the world should move ahead gradually in its efforts to reduce nuclear arms under existing frameworks like the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. Tokyo's position is in line with the stance of the United States.

The number of countries attending the international conferences on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons has been increasing steadily.

A total of 158 countries took part in the Vienna conference, including the United States and Britain, which attended for the first time.

It is really regrettable that at this venue the representative of the only country to have suffered nuclear attacks acted in a way that can put a damper on international momentum toward a future without nuclear arms.

It is quite natural that hibakusha criticized Sano's remark, and Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida admonished him.

How should Japan adjust its security policy, which has been based on the protection provided by the U.S. "nuclear umbrella," so that it can contribute more to international efforts toward a world without nuclear weapons?

It is time for the government to start thinking seriously about this question and taking actions accordingly. This will, of course, be no easy challenge.

Only by tackling this challenge head-on, however, will Japan be able to serve as a bridge between nuclear powers obsessed with the theory of nuclear deterrent and non-nuclear countries seeking to achieve the abolition of nuclear arms as a vital humanitarian imperative.

--The Asahi Shimbun, Dec. 21

Japan should be more involved in nuclear disarmament

January 4, 2015

Experts urge Japan to play greater role in nuclear disarmament process

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2015/01/04/national/politics-diplomacy/experts-urge-japan-play-greater-role-nuclear-disarmament-process/#.VKo7xHt1Cic>

JJI

WASHINGTON – Ahead of August’s 70th anniversaries of the U.S. atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, some experts are calling on Japan to play a greater role in the effort toward global nuclear disarmament.

“The Japanese government could be more supportive of reductions (of nuclear arms) than it is,” said Joseph Cirincione, president of the Ploughshares Fund, a U.S. group aiming to create a nuclear-free world. Cirincione, also a member of U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry’s International Security Advisory Board, said U.S. government officials often stress that President Barack Obama needs support from U.S. allies in pushing his agenda of nuclear disarmament.

“If there was any ally who could play that role, it would be Japan,” Cirincione said.

“And it would be in 2015,” he added, referring to a review conference on the Nonproliferation Treaty to be held in April and May, as well as the 70th anniversaries of the nuclear bombings.

Hiroshima was devastated by a U.S. atomic bomb on Aug. 6, 1945, in the closing days of World War II, and Nagasaki followed the same fate three days later.

A world without nuclear weapons is not yet in sight, although the United States has reduced its stockpiles of nuclear warheads by more than 80 percent from the peak level in the midst of the Cold War.

Nuclear disarmament talks between the U.S. and Russia, which together still account for over 90 percent of all existing nuclear weapons in the world, have stalled.

Last year, relations between the two countries plunged to their lowest level since the Cold War, due to the Ukraine crisis.

Daryl Kimball, executive director at the Arms Control Association, a U.S. think tank, said that Japan and other U.S. allies “should be more vocal” about encouraging the U.S. and Russia to promote nuclear disarmament.

Kimball proposed a nuclear disarmament summit and said, “The year 2015 could be a very good year to start such a nuclear disarmament process,” citing the anniversaries of the atomic bombings. “Japan would be a very natural host country.”

Obama should visit Hiroshima/Nagasaki

January 6, 2015

Editorial: Address reality of atomic bombing of Hiroshima, Nagasaki

<http://mainichi.jp/english/english/perspectives/news/20150106p2a00m0na004000c.html>

The pain and suffering of hibakusha, or the survivors of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki that occurred 70 years ago, is surely unique. **One cannot help but wonder whether their plight has been sufficiently communicated to all parts of the world.**

According to statistics released by the Health, Labor and Welfare Ministry last year, the number of those who hold official certifications as hibakusha, which entitle them to financial assistance for medical care from the government, fell below 200,000 for the first time in history. The average age of hibakusha has surpassed 79. It is a matter of course but still worrisome that those who experienced the horrors of the atomic bombing have been decreasing year by year.

In the meantime, little progress has been made on nuclear disarmament. Rather, it appears that the world is backing away from nuclear arms reduction. Human beings' memories of the tragedies that hibakusha experienced 70 years ago must not be allowed to fade away. It is important to take the opportunity on the 70th anniversary of the end to World War II to listen squarely to what hibakusha have to say and think about a path toward nuclear disarmament.

Mayors for Peace, a Hiroshima-based group of mayors from all over the world, aims to enact a Nuclear Weapons Convention, which would totally ban the production, possession and use of nuclear arms, by 2015 and achieve nuclear disarmament by 2020.

The organization now comprises 6,490 local governments in 160 countries and regions. Although it is unrealistic to achieve nuclear disarmament within five years, Mayors for Peace "will not give up on its 2020 goal" says Secretary-General Yasuyoshi Komizo, who also serves as the chairperson of the Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation. This is because the mayors desire to at least pave the way for nuclear disarmament while aging hibakusha are still alive.

Keiko Ogura, 78, head of Hiroshima Interpreters for Peace (HIP), has told foreigners in English about the "living hell" she experienced and witnessed in Hiroshima shortly after the atomic bomb was dropped on the city. Ogura was exposed to radiation near her home about 2.4 kilometers north of the hypocenter on Aug. 6, 1945. Ogura saw the flash of the bombing before the blast hurled her to the ground. She subsequently saw black rain. She remembers that many hibakusha were wandering in the city just like ghosts. Without sufficient medical treatment they soon died.

Ogura also spoke about her experiences as a hibakusha at a foreign ministerial conference on nuclear nonproliferation in Hiroshima last year. She also met and talked with U.S. Undersecretary of State Rose Gottemoeller, who attended the meeting as an observer.

"My workmates have died one after another, while some others have become sick. It's sad. My work is getting tougher and tougher," Ogura says.

Ogura knows that some U.S. citizens feel a sense of guilt about the country's atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

As a member of a Japanese delegation, she visited the United States in 2003 to hand over a petition calling for nuclear disarmament that bore numerous signatures of Japanese nationals. At the same time, the Enola Gay, which dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima, was placed on display at a museum in Washington. Someone shouted abusive language at the delegation. In one meeting, however, about 30 Americans shook hands with members of the Japanese delegation, repeatedly saying, "I'm sorry." It was an impressive scene.

Still, the voices that say "I'm sorry" to Japan have not spread throughout the United States, even though President Obama pledged in 2009 to pursue a world without nuclear weapons and mentioned the United States "moral responsibility" as a country that has used nuclear arms. Opinion polls conducted in the United States in 2009 and 2010 show that about 60 percent of U.S. citizens believe the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki was justifiable.

The U.S. government is of the view that the atomic bombing helped end the war earlier and saved the lives of many U.S. soldiers and others. However, there are quite a few politicians and scholars in the United

States who argue that the atomic bombing was unnecessary. Meanwhile, Washington has refused to change its official view, which could be seen as having mythical overtones.

However, the United States apparently has no choice but to admit that fresh efforts toward nuclear disarmament are necessary. The Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) requires that the five official nuclear powers -- the United States, Britain, France, China and Russia -- hold sincere negotiations toward nuclear arms reductions. However, little progress has been made on U.S.-Russia talks, while grave concerns have been expressed over allegations that China is expanding its nuclear arms. Moreover, North Korea is believed to have armed itself with nuclear weapons, following India and Pakistan. Israel is also believed to possess such arms.

The five countries that are defined by the NPT as nuclear powers are also permanent members of the U.N. Security Council. These countries deserve criticism that they take advantage of their privileges while neglecting their efforts toward nuclear disarmament. As such, it is only natural that non-nuclear powers' moves to join hands with each other in their efforts to pressure nuclear powers to change their attitudes are gaining momentum.

As part of these moves, there are growing calls for the enactment of a Nuclear Weapons Convention. The issue may be discussed at an NPT review conference to be convened later this year. Most nuclear powers have reacted coolly to these calls, but the Obama administration should take concerns expressed by non-nuclear powers seriously. Parties to the NPT should hold significant discussions at the NPT review conference that will help progress the ongoing efforts toward nuclear disarmament.

What is more important is for President Obama to visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki. To realize such a visit, Obama will be required to overcome various problems, such as the issue of the responsibility for the atomic bombing, as well as with overall Japan-U.S. relations. However, we have claimed that mourning those who died in the atomic bombing is the first step toward Obama's journey toward a world without nuclear weapons. It would be of great significance for a U.S. president to visit ground zero in Hiroshima and Nagasaki in order to heighten the international momentum for nuclear arms reductions that remain deadlocked and develop new cooperative relations between Japan and the United States. President Obama should look straight at the reality of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

January 06, 2015(Mainichi Japan)

Closer to midnight

Source : Quartz

<http://qz.com/326517/humanity-keeps-discovering-brilliant-new-ways-to-destroy-itself/>

Humanity keeps discovering brilliant new ways to destroy itself

Leo Mirani@lmirani

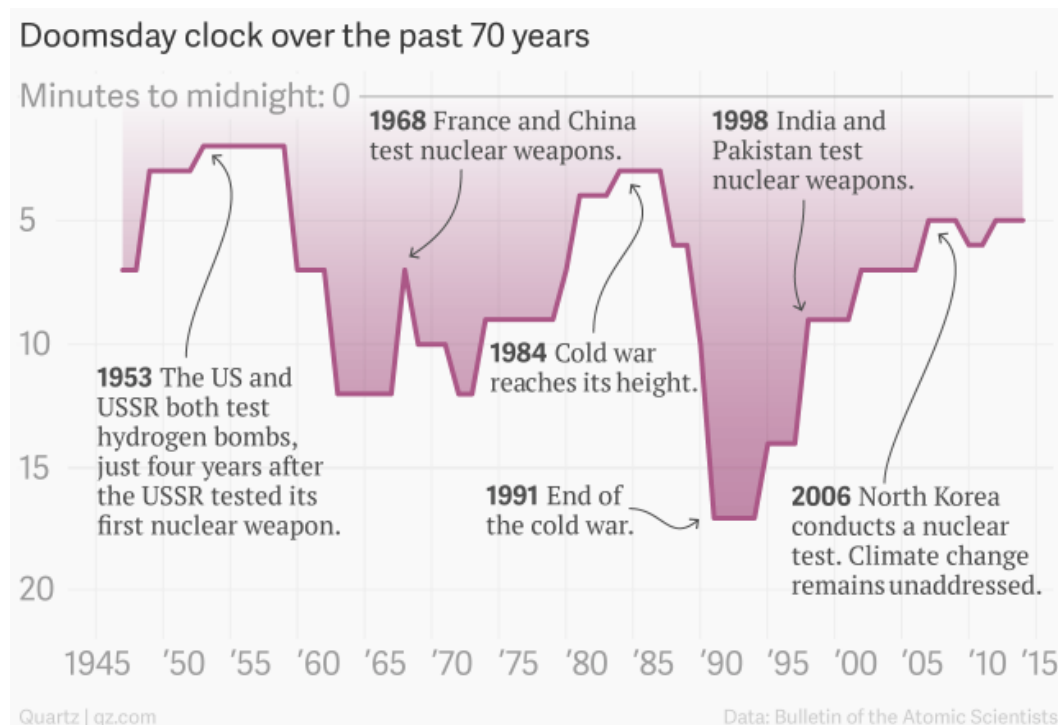
15 January 2015

Of humanity's many notable achievements since the end of World War II, perhaps the greatest is simply that we haven't yet destroyed ourselves.

In the past 70 years, we have sent men to the moon, eradicated small pox, and created the modern information technology revolution. But at the same time, we have built ever more powerful killing machines, created biological agents of warfare, refused to take action on a warming

planet, starting playing god with other organisms, and learned how to use software to cause physical damage. It is a small miracle we're still here to appreciate our advancements.

For seven decades, one publication has been dedicated to watching these threats—and warning of their consequences. Established in 1945 as the world entered the nuclear age, the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* was founded as a forum for public debate on the dangers of nuclear technology, by scientists who worked on the Manhattan Project. In 1947, the magazine created the “Doomsday Clock,” which every year ascertains how close we are to midnight—a metaphor for global annihilation. This month, the *Bulletin*, which won America’s National Magazine Award for General Excellence in 2007, celebrates its 70th anniversary with a free issue looking back at seven decades of scientists writing in the public interest.



Always with us

It is easy to think today that the threat of nuclear annihilation receded with the end of the cold war. Indeed, even the science and security board of the *Bulletin*, responsible for setting the Doomsday Clock, in 1991 estimated that humanity was as far as it had ever been from destroying itself. Both the *Bulletin*’s board and the rest of us were quickly disabused of that notion.

Exchanges as low as 50 weapons or 100 weapons would create worldwide nuclear winter. In the years since, India, Pakistan and North Korea have tested nuclear weapons, Iran seems intent of acquiring them, and Russia and the United States have embarked on an ambitious—and expensive—modernization program for their weapons. John Mecklin, the editor of the *Bulletin*, estimates that the US is spending close to \$1 trillion over 30 years to modernise its “triad,” or the three legs of its nuclear weapons capability: missiles, submarines, and airborne bombers. Russia is doing the same.

“These improvements—if you want to call them that—are not just incredibly expensive, they are designed to make the weapons more reliable, harder to shoot down, more accurate. It is what many view as the beginning of a modernization arms race. Not just the US and Russia. All nuclear weapons countries are involved in upgrading and modernizing their arsenals,” says Mecklin.

Despite perceptions that the era of preparing for complete nuclear annihilation has passed, “the situation is just as dire it ever was,” says Mecklin. Global arms reduction efforts have stalled. Though down from the

heights of the 1980s, there remain thousands of commissioned nuclear weapons ready to go at a few minutes' notice. And recent tension between the West and Russia haven't made the world any more secure. "If there were a nuclear confrontation, the likelihood that civilization would end is very high even if it's a relatively small confrontation. There are some studies that show that exchanges as low as 50 weapons or 100 weapons would create worldwide nuclear winter."

The dark side of technology

It is not just nuclear weapons that threaten humanity. The Bulletin has in the past decade formally expanded its remit to include new threats to civilization, namely climate change and biological warfare. The magazine also informally looks at other threats, such as cyberwar that could spark real world confrontation; synthetic biology that could create new pandemics; and lethal autonomous weapons (or "killer robots") that can target and fire without human intervention. The Bulletin also is beginning to look at artificial intelligence.

"Killer robots" can target and fire without human intervention. The new threats are, like the old threats, products of human ingenuity and technological advancement. They arise from what are called "dual-use technologies." Nuclear energy provides cheap, clean energy, and nuclear medicine saves lives, but nuclear weapons are catastrophic advancements on conventional weapons. Similarly, information technology has enriched the world in myriad ways, synthetic biology could save many more lives, and autonomous robots could make the world a safer place—but all these technologies also could be used to cause harm.

What is the solution to emerging threats? Mecklin argues in favor of new organizations tasked with paying attention to developments in these areas. The International Atomic Energy Agency monitors the nuclear industry. The Biological Weapons Convention covers bio-warfare. But cyberwar and other emerging technologies have no globally agreed-upon standards to which states must adhere. Creating these would be a first step.

Closer to midnight

The decision to pay attention to new threats has paid off for the Bulletin, as has going digital-only. Mecklin says the Bulletin's website gets some 100,000 unique visitors a month, up 50% on last year. Moreover, readers download some 500,000 articles a year from the bimonthly subscription magazine on Sage Publications. The numbers are small compared to mainstream news media, but the readers are an influential bunch, ranging from American and Russian defense officials to scientists in the Middle East and South Asia.

You just have to hope that people in power in major countries realise the power of these technologies. The Doomsday Clock, too, remains a potent ambassador for the magazine. The board makes a decision every year about whether we have come closer to or moved further away from destroying ourselves. The next decision will be announced on Jan. 22. Considering the disastrous year global security had in 2014, it would seem foolish to bet against ticking ever closer to midnight. Looking at the myriad new threats now facing humanity, Mecklin poses a crucial question in his introduction to the 70th anniversary issue (available [here](#)): "In many ways, the question today is the same one that confronted the atomic scientists in the fall of 1945: Can humans learn to control the potentially catastrophic misuse of the technologies they create, or will they let those technologies destroy them?"

Asked by Quartz to answer his own question, Mecklin says this:

"I do this job. If I didn't believe that humans could in some way control technologies and not destroy themselves I would not be in the job I am. More than probably anybody, I realize what a challenge the nuclear age has been. And the response has been far from perfect. But in the end you have to figure that

humanity doesn't want to kill itself. And you just have to hope that people who get in power in major countries in the world realize the power of these technologies."

Alternative to NPT

January 24, 2015

Japan Political Pulse: Rational alternatives to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty

<http://mainichi.jp/english/english/perspectives/news/20150124p2a00m0na004000c.html>

The 70-year anniversary of the end of World War II also marks 70 years since the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Isn't it about time that Japan rectify its hypocrisy of ostensibly advocating an end to nuclear armament while turning a blind eye to the United States' deviation from official policy?

The rapid globalization of information we see today indicates that the precise expression of a trusted nation's position on an issue can resonate widely and shape international opinion. An age in which everything was decided by military and economic power is over.

The Japan-United States security alliance still comprises the foundation of Japanese defense policy. An immediate call for the elimination of all military power, including nuclear weapons, would undoubtedly be criticized as empty theorizing. But it would be worthwhile to explore new alternatives to the current nuclear non-proliferation arrangement, which has reached a stalemate due to the egos of nuclear-armed states.

The recommendations of Ronald Dore, professor emeritus at the University of London and a sociologist who is an expert on Japan, may seem bizarre at first glance, but is actually extremely rational.

Dore believes Japan should withdraw from the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), declare that it will never produce nuclear weapons, and set up meetings with Germany and other countries to discuss and establish a new treaty for nuclear management.

Dore, who specializes in the social and economic structure of Japan, has long been involved in Japan since he studied at the University of Tokyo as an exchange student in 1950. According to his recent book, "Genmetsu" (Disillusionment), he's a self-proclaimed liberal who became disenchanted with Japan's spreading neoliberalism and conservative swing since the 1980s, and eventually stopped receiving invitations to symposiums held by the Japan Business Federation (Keidanren).

The NPT, meanwhile, went into effect in 1970, and is a treaty that prohibits nuclear armament by countries with the exception of World War II's victors: the U.S., Russia, Britain, France and China. While 190 countries are party to the treaty today, India and Pakistan -- both non-member states -- are in possession of nuclear weapons. The nuclear armament of Israel, another non-member, is an open secret. North Korea withdrew from the NPT and conducted nuclear tests, and Iran is also suspected of nuclear development. **In essence, the NPT has become full of holes.**

The treaty operates on the unfair premise that whoever possesses nuclear weapons gains the upper hand. According to Dore's book, "Nihon no tenki" (Japan's turning point), the NPT is effectively a treaty that protects Israel's monopoly on nuclear weapons in the Middle East, which threatens peace in the region. After a review of the NPT by signatories in 1995, the treaty was extended indefinitely. Since then, a review conference is called every five years. This April, the fifth such review conference will be held in New York. In 2009, U.S. President Barack Obama called for a world without nuclear weapons in a speech he made in Prague, and received the Nobel Peace Prize later that year. However, the NPT's review conference the following year was mired in heated debate over Israel's refusal to sign the treaty. Ultimately, momentum toward nuclear disarmament was lost amid rising tensions between the U.S. and China and Obama's plummeting popularity.

In theory, if Japan were to drop out of the NPT, it would have the option of nuclear armament. In 1995, Japan's then Defense Agency explored the pros and cons of nuclear armament in light of the Cold War's end, and concluded that armament would not be advantageous. Today, the mainstream position taken by Japanese government officials and private intellectuals is to support the U.S. and prevent the NPT from collapse.

Dore, however, says that doing so is akin to riding a bicycle whose tires have worn down and are about to go flat without searching for a shop that will exchange the threadbare tires for new ones.

Being skeptical of the NPT does not automatically mean that one is for nuclear armament. Non-nuclear states taking the initiative to build a new nuclear management structure would amount to "taking a panoramic perspective of the world map" and engaging in "proactive peace," both of which Prime Minister Shinzo Abe advocates.

Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany, a fellow non-nuclear state, is set to visit Japan in March. (By Takao Yamada, Senior Expert Writer)
January 24, 2015(Mainichi Japan)

Japan almost provided with nuclear weapons in the 50s

January 23, 2015

U.S. weighed giving Japan nuclear weapons in 1950s

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2015/01/23/national/history/u-s-weighed-giving-japan-nuclear-weapons-in-1950s/#.VMJaRS51Cos>

by Masakatsu Ota

Kyodo

Top U.S. military officials considered giving the Self-Defense Forces atomic weapons in the 1950s under an arrangement similar to NATO's "nuclear-sharing" deal, declassified documents from the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff revealed Friday.

In February 1958, the Joint Chiefs decided its "position," saying: "The United States would prefer that Japan integrate appropriate atomic weapons into the Japanese self-defense forces."

The decision came five months after the U.S. military and the SDF conducted a joint map exercise assuming the use of nuclear weapons, according to the documents.

The nuclear map exercise, conducted in September 1957, had never been revealed to the public until a joint investigation by Kyodo News and Akira Kurosaki, an associate professor of Fukushima University, uncovered the documents recently at the U.S. National Archives in Maryland.

As Cold War tensions rose in the 1950s with the Soviet Union's successful nuclear tests and its development of hydrogen bombs, **the administration of President Dwight D. Eisenhower dramatically increased its dependence on nuclear arms under its "New Look" policy, which equated them with conventional weaponry.**

The Joint Chiefs decision on a potential nuclear option for Japan — which had been attacked with atomic bombs just a decade earlier — is consistent with the idea that U.S. Cold War mentality relied on nuclear arsenals as a countermeasure against the massive conventional capability of the Soviet bloc.

A document, dated Feb. 17, 1958, said that "combined U.S.-Japan Map Exercise FUJI was conducted in Japan during the period 24-28 September 1957," during which the use of nuclear weapons was simulated. Although the document does not give a specific venue for the exercise, an oral record by a former senior Ground Self-Defense Force official, the late Gen. Ryuhei Nakamura, indicated that "FUJI" was held at Camp Drake, a U.S. base that was once located in an area straddling Tokyo and Saitama Prefecture.

The record was left at the National Institute of Defense Studies, a research branch of the Defense Ministry. According to the oral record, the Japanese participants wanted to know how the U.S. military would use tactical nuclear weapons in Japan. The U.S. side, however, did not provide precise information. Still, the Joint Chiefs documents detailed questions raised by the Japanese "co-director" during the joint map exercise.

"Would the United States hold all the nuclear weapons for use by her own delivery systems or would the United States release some weapons for use by Japan?" the document paraphrased the questions posed by the co-director.

According to the paper, the co-director also asked if the U.S. would "prefer Japan to have conventional weapons only," while also querying the sensitive issue of whether Washington would give its blessing for Tokyo acquiring atomic weapons.

"If Japan were to decide to arm herself with nuclear weapons, could she depend upon U.S. support for such a plan?" the document said.

A memorandum dated Nov. 20, 1957, by Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Arleigh Burke said "the significance of the questions posed by the Japanese Co-Director . . . warrants the early consideration of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

"These questions express the concern of the only country in the world that ever experienced a nuclear attack . . ." the memorandum added.

In response to Burke's suggestion, the Joint Chiefs ultimately decided its positions at a meeting on Feb. 12, 1958.

The Joint Chiefs document dated Feb. 17, 1958, further elaborates on its positions, saying **"(t)he provision of such weapons support to Japan would be primarily dependent on the desires of Japan to be provided with atomic weapons** and her development of capability to employ effectively such weapons."

In addition to the U.S. preference for integration of nuclear weapons with the SDF, the Joint Chiefs document said, "(the SDF) must eventually be equipped with the most modern conventional and atomic weapons."

These Joint Chiefs positions were conveyed to the Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Pacific Command (CINCPAC).

Another Joint Chiefs document dated Sept. 17, 1958, noted “(t)he United States is willing to support her allies with atomic weapons, after the NATO pattern, subject to the desire of Japan to acquire such weapons and to develop a capability for their effective employment.”

However, **the Joint Chiefs positions on arming the SDF with nuclear weapons were not formally proposed to the Japanese government.**

Other declassified U.S. documents obtained by Kyodo News suggested caution by U.S. policymakers who were familiar with **Japan’s volatile domestic situation and growing anti-nuclear sentiment following the March 1954 Daigo Fukuryu Maru (Lucky Dragon No. 5) incident**, in which a Japanese fishing vessel was exposed to radioactive fallout from the U.S. thermonuclear “Bravo Shot” near the Bikini Atoll in the Pacific.

“The U.S. military considered integration of nuclear weapons into the SDF, and some SDF officials showed interest in this idea,” Fukushima University’s Kurosaki said.

“There was a backdrop that the U.S. administration deepened its dependence on nuclear weapons in its national security strategy. From these contexts, then-Prime Minister (Nobusuke) Kishi stated it is possible for Japan to possess nuclear weapons (for defensive purposes) even under the Constitution,” he said.

Kurosaki said he wonders if Japan would have continued to be a nonnuclear power if the Daigo Fukuryu Maru incident had not occurred and anti-nuclear sentiment in the country had not risen so sharply.

On the Japanese side, from the mid-1950s to mid-1960s, the Staff College of the Japanese Ground Self-Defense Force taught future top officials about nuclear tactics and doctrines that were imported from the U.S. Command and General Staff College (CGSC), former top SDF officials told Kyodo News.

“Which direction would nuclear fallout move and how should we conduct military operations evading this fallout? These were brought back to Japan by a SDF official who **studied (nuclear tactics)** at the U.S. CGSC,” former GSDF Major Gen. Kiyoshi Maekawa said.

But nuclear courses at the Staff College in Tokyo were suspended after the public’s growing anti-nuclear sentiment culminated in the government crafting the three nonnuclear principles in 1967.

“The Lucky Dragon Incident, the (national-level) ban-the-nuclear-bomb movement and three nonnuclear principles” greatly impacted the SDF’s position, former Gen. Mitsuaki Yokochi said.

ICRC president on nuclear weapons

February 20, 2015

ICRC president seeks elimination of nuclear weapons from a humanitarian standpoint

http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/politics/AJ201502200016

By MASATO TAINAKA/ Staff Writer

Peter Maurer, International Committee of the Red Cross president, believes it is important to focus on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons and “the necessity to move forward on nuclear disarmament.”

During a recent visit to Japan, Maurer, 58, was asked why his organization was so deeply involved in the movement to eliminate nuclear weapons.

He said the ICRC has made assessments on the existing international humanitarian response capability if one is used, and "the fact that either by accident or by use, we are dealing with highly contagious, long-term effect issues, which easily can overwhelm humanitarian actors is very clear."

The ICRC has long been involved in programs from the standpoint of neutrality and humanitarianism. That stance has led it to provide support even to residents living in extremely dangerous areas, such as those under the control of the militant group Islamic State.

"ICRC has continued to say that we will try to engage 'as good as we can,' with all armed groups, in order to assist and protect people in need," Maurer said. "But, we come to limits. We have no access in many regions of the world where armed groups are in control of certain territories. Nevertheless, we continuously try to expand our network and to build humanitarian operations, and I think, again, there is no recipe, no 'one size fits all.' "

The transcript of the interview with Maurer follows:

[.....]

Q: Now. I would like to ask about nuclear weapons. ICRC has advocated the inhumanity of nuclear weapons since 2010, I think. Your predecessor, the former president, made a statement, which triggered the international debate on the inhumanity of nuclear weapons.

Why were nuclear weapons picked among the many humanitarian issues the ICRC was concerned with at that time?

A: Well, in our priority setting, the humanitarian impact of all weapons has continuously and consistently been an important work stream at ICRC, and in that sense it's nothing but normal--I mean, it would be legitimate to ask if we would not deal with nuclear weapons, then why not? Because, we deal with all the weapons and the impact.

We come to different conclusions, but it has always been, and it is also clearly a task from the Geneva Conventions, which legitimizes the work of ICRC, to inform the international community about the humanitarian impact of weapons.

So, after our engagement on chemical, on biological, on laser weapons, on mines, on cluster ammunition, on the arms trade treaty, it's nothing but normal from the history of the organization, from its mandate, but also from the specific experience from Hiroshima, that you deal with those weapons.

Now, I think, at the end of the day, we have consistently held the same position since 1945 when our predecessor Dr. Marcel Junod rescued the victims in Hiroshima.

Q: As far as I know, I have heard that it has something to do with Obama taking office in 2009, and the Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference final document mentioned the inhumanity of the nuclear weapons, in 2010. Then your former president strongly committed to this issue. Am I correct?

A: I think, after decades of stating a discrepancy between the assessment on the humanitarian impact of a weapon and the fact that the disarmament process on nuclear weapons is illusive, I think it was important to see when there are upcoming opportunities in which a state could deliver on their commitments..

Again, ICRC, neither my predecessor nor myself, will wish to substitute ourselves to the responsibility of states. It's for states to decide how to negotiate, where to negotiate and, "at the end of the day," what to negotiate. What we can do is to remind them what is at stake, and for decades, I think, nuclear weapons have been basically part of strategic reflections and of military and defense machineries.

And the big advantage, since the last NPT Conference, which showed some openings and we had agreements on a nuclear weapons free zone in the Middle East Conference, and on all those issues, so it showed some opening, and this was the climate, the political climate, in which my predecessor came to the conclusion that it was important to go back to a position that we have held since 1945, and just to remind

the international community about the humanitarian impact, about the necessity to move forward on nuclear disarmament.

You can't credibly--I mean, it's a question also of the credibility of an international instrument. When you have a commitment upon which there is no action.

Q: Sure. Then, to the kind of very delicate question, at the Vienna Conference about humanitarian consequences of the nuclear weapons in December last year, you, as the president of the ICRC, concluded that **there is no adequate international humanitarian response capacity after the use of a nuclear weapon**. But, on the other hand, as you know, Toshio Sano, the Japanese disarmament ambassador, the representative to Geneva, dismissed it, saying, "It's too pessimistic," and he insisted on pursuing a possible way to rescue, in the case of, even, a nuclear aftermath.

A: I would respond in the following way. First, there is no question that in the event of the use of nuclear weapons, ICRC and the Red Cross and the Red Crescent movement would do everything we can to assist those who need assistance.

And I think we have a track record and a legitimacy that is uncontested and respected, and I am not pessimistic, in that sense. I am very assertive and, I think, we have a proven track record of doing the best we can when major disasters hit.

So, the second question, then, is a question of scenario and appreciation of what would happen. **We cannot imagine at the ICRC that a nuclear weapon is used in a targeted, limited way, without leading to escalation**. If you question this hypothesis, you may question our conclusion.

But, **our basic hypothesis is that we do not see how a nuclear weapon can be used and can be limited in scope, from what we know today, in just the use of one weapon. And, if you suppose escalation, to a certain extent, the capacities are soon overwhelmed, and so I don't want to be pessimistic. Maybe I would rather counter and say it's a realistic assessment that ICRC has done.**

And, if there are over-capacities, should something happen, all the better. But I don't see it happening. And I think it is important for a humanitarian organization that we are also clear with states. We are not here to cope with every mess that is organized in the world.

There are responsibilities for states, and so we have to be clear on that. Again, it's difficult to imagine that we can use it in a contained way.

I can imagine that there is an accident somewhere, a nuclear accident, and Fukushima has shown, in the civilian part of nuclear accidents, that even if they are very big accidents, you can mobilize enormous support. But you have also seen where the difficulties are.

I mean, **but the fact that either by accident or by use, we are dealing with highly contagious, long-term effect issues, which easily can overwhelm humanitarian actors is very clear**. I mean, what we say with regard to no adequate international humanitarian response is not just taken out of the blue. We have made assessments on the existing capacities, and we have assumed a sort of a minimal scope of what realistically could happen.

Q: The viewpoint was included in the chair's summary of the Vienna Conference. However, the five nuclear powers under the NPT--I mean, the United States and the United Kingdom participated in the conference, but still hesitate to join this humanitarian discourse initiative.

And **the Japanese government also resists any negotiation for a ban treaty or any legally binding procedure for nuclear weapons abolition**. So, what is your next step, as the ICRC, to persuade those nuclear powers, and their allies under the nuclear umbrellas?

A: Well, I think we have been quite transparent and clear over the last couple of years. We have participated in a movement to make more precise and sharpen our understanding of the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons.

What we think that this should lead to is, at least, a reassessment of nuclear weapons powers on what is at stake in a negotiation. At the NPT Conference in May, we have another opportunity to look at such possible reassessments and to merge the efforts of over 120 or 130 states participating in Oslo-Nayarit-Vienna, and the P-5 (Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Nuclear-Weapon States).

And I think there is a broad majority of states, as we read, interested to engage with the P-5. And I think **what is coming out of this three-year process of facts and hypotheses and thinking on the humanitarian impact should at least be seriously considered.** I think this is the only thing we are asking. **We still believe that we cannot continue just expressing commitments, without a process, leading somehow towards the commitment.**

We are realistic. We don't think that "global zero" will happen tomorrow. But, we should at least get away from these polarized discussions, where 120 and more states continuously discuss and highlight the issue of the humanitarian impact, and a number of states do not want to discuss this issue.

And I think what is wrong with moving from commitments which the P-5 did themselves, in declarations a couple of years ago, and what is wrong with legally binding when they, themselves, bound themselves legally to disarm? It's just a question of credibility, that an international agreement, where the commitment will be a weak agreement if there is no follow-up to the commitments.

Q: That's the majority countries' argument, hibakusha's argument and international organization's argument. But, on Feb. 6 in London, the P-5 held a conference and released a joint statement that says that the P-5 reaffirmed that a step-by-step approach to nuclear disarmament remains the only realistic and practical route to achieving a world without nuclear weapons. So they are going to make the same statement in the upcoming NPT Review Conference in April and May.

A: Yes, but I don't see a discrepancy between a step-by-step approach and what we have advocated for, that there is a narrowing of the gap and that the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons is taken into consideration. I am happy about the step-by-step approach, if a step is done.

And it always--if steps are done. And if the steps leads to the final objective, I am very happy.

Q: So, how could you persuade the P-5 to this credible disarmament process? They still argue that the step-by-step approach is the best, there is no other way, and Japan joined this way. How could the ICRC break the ice?

A: I don't think it is our role, necessarily, to break the ice. It is the responsibilities of states to define where, on what, and how they want to negotiate. It's the responsibility of ICRC to draw the international community's attention to the humanitarian impact of weapons, and I think we are not naïve; we know that the first criterion under which a weapon is considered is always military and strategic.

But, we think it is important to add a new dimension of inhumanity to these assessments. And when the new dimension is supported by so many states and is supported by so many facts, this should, by all means, impress on the pace and the way negotiations are envisaged.

Again, we are not proposing any specific agreement, any specific conventions. It's really up to states to decide. But, what we are underlining is that the impact is many-fold and serious, is long term, stresses capacities to the utmost, or overwhelms them. It's uncontrollable in terms of environmental and nutritional impact. All those elements that we have mentioned over the past three years, and where a lot of studies have been made--not only by ICRC but by many others.

New facts are now "on the ground," and I think this has to be taken seriously. In the negotiations, I think that's our bottom line.

Afterward, you can go step by step and you can mandate through the NPT. You can mandate the international community to explore different models of legal agreements and different steps, and which steps, and you can design a process on the basis of such a commitment.

Q: You visited Hiroshima this time. What was your impression of the city?

A: It's always involves a lot of emotions. I mean, on the personal level, of course, even 70 years after the dropping of the bomb, it's a very moving experience, from the account of the survivors to the work of the local Red Cross chapter, to the exhibit in the museum, to see the political authorities, the mayor, engaging and trying to somehow see how to carry forward what was the experience of the city. So, I thought it was an extremely interesting day.

And, in terms of the ICRC, what perhaps struck me the most is from the account of the survivors, to see how close this is to our appreciation of--in a sort of a more humanitarian policy sense, on what has to be done. The survivors speak about all the humanitarian impacts of the nuclear weapons which we have been discussing over the last couple of years, in particular, about the indiscrimination that comes with--the indiscriminate character of--the weapon, about the long-term impact of the weapon, its generational impact, about the possible destruction of assistance infrastructure. So, all the important avenues which have been fed by scientific research and by policy papers over the last couple of years, come up.

So, quite sincerely how I still feel, that it's important to deliver on the wish and dreams from the survivors now, and to move from commitment to concrete reality.

Peter Maurer was born in Switzerland in 1956. In 1987 he entered the Swiss diplomatic service. In 2000 he was appointed ambassador and head of the human security division in the political directorate of the Swiss Department of Foreign Affairs in Bern. In 2004, Maurer was appointed ambassador and permanent representative of Switzerland to the United Nations in New York. In January 2010, Maurer was appointed secretary of state for foreign affairs in Bern and took over the reins of the Swiss Department of Foreign Affairs. He succeeded Jakob Kellenberger as ICRC president on July 1, 2012.

By MASATO TAINAKA/ Staff Write

Nuclear weapons: Risk agenda

February 26, 2015

Belling the nuclear wildcat

Five years ago hopes were high that the world was at last seriously headed toward nuclear disarmament. In April 2009 the then exciting new U.S. President Barack Obama gave a stirring and inspiring speech in Prague in which he outlined his dream of a world freed of the existence and threat of nuclear weapons. The United States and Russia negotiated a new strategic arms reduction treaty (New START) that cuts their deployed strategic nuclear warheads by one-third to 1,550 each. The inaugural Nuclear Security Summit in Washington attracted broad international buy-in to an ambitious new agenda.

In contrast to the total and scandalous failure of its 2005 predecessor, the Eighth Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference of May 2010 was a modest success.

In sum, there were grounds for optimism that there would be significant forward movement on the nuclear disarmament, nonproliferation and security agendas.

By the end of 2012, as reported in my Centre's inaugural "Nuclear Weapons: The State of Play" report, much of this sense of optimism had evaporated. By the end of 2014, as our followup report "Nuclear Weapons: The State of Play 2015" documents, the fading optimism has given way to pessimism.

North Korea conducted its third nuclear test in early 2013 and the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) is yet to enter into force.

We are no closer to resolving the challenge posed by North Korea and a comprehensive agreement on Iran eluded negotiators by the extended deadline of Nov. 24, 2014. The push for talks on a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East called for by earlier NPT conferences has stalled and the region remains highly volatile.

New START was signed and ratified, but the treaty left stockpiles intact and disagreements about missile defense and conventional-arms imbalances unresolved. Nuclear weapons numbers have decreased overall but increased in Asia; nuclear-weapons programs in India, Pakistan and China have accelerated; and fissile material production to make still more warheads is not yet banned.

Cyber threats to nuclear weapons systems have intensified, outer space remains at risk of nuclearization, and the upsurge of geopolitical tensions over the crisis in Ukraine produced flawed conclusions about the folly of giving up nuclear weapons on the one hand, and open reminders about Russia's substantial nuclear arsenal, on the other.

The peoples of the world recognize the dangers of nuclear arsenals. Curiously, however, their concerns and fears find little reflection in the media coverage or in governments' policy priorities.

As part of the Global Attitudes survey conducted by the U.S. Pew Research Center from March 17 to June 5, 2014, a total of 48,643 respondents in 44 countries were asked which one of the following five poses the gravest threat to the world: nuclear weapons, inequality, religious-ethnic hatred, environmental pollution, or AIDS and other diseases?

Nuclear weapons was chosen as the top threat in 10 of the 44 countries polled (including two nuclear-armed states Russia and Pakistan), and as the second gravest threat in another 16 (including China).

The regional breakdown of the median responses shows that nuclear weapons were considered to be the top threat to the world by 20 percent of the people in the Middle East, 19 percent in Europe, 21 percent in Asia, 26 percent in Latin America, 22 percent in Africa, and 23 percent even in the U.S.

No Latin American country has nuclear weapons The continent's anti-nuclear commitment was reinforced by the negotiation of the regional nuclear-weapon-free zone in 1967 under the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which consolidates and deepens the NPT prohibitions on getting the bomb.

Since then virtually the entire Southern Hemisphere has embraced additional comparable zones in the South Pacific, Southeast Asia and Africa.

Consequently looking out at the world from our vantage point, we see no security upsides by way of benefits from nuclear weapons; only risks.

Indeed it helps to conceptualize the nuclear weapons challenge in the language of risks. Originally many countries acquired the bomb in order to help manage national security risks.

As the four famous strategic heavyweights of Henry Kissinger, Sam Nunn, William Perry and George Shultz — all card-carrying realists — have argued in a series of five influential articles in *The Wall Street Journal* between 2007 and 2013, **the risks of nuclear proliferation and terrorism posed by the existence of nuclear weapons far outweigh their modest contributions to security since the end of the Cold War.**

Viewed through this lens, the nuclear risks agenda has four components:

- *Risk management.* •

We must ensure that existing weapons stockpiles are not used; that all nuclear weapons and materials are secured against theft and leakage to rogue actors like terrorist groups; and that all nuclear reactors and plants have fail-safe safety measures in place with respect to designs, controls, disposal and accident response systems.

•*Risk reduction.*•

This means strengthening the stability-enhancing features of deterrence, such as robust command and control systems and deployment on submarines. As part of this, it would help if Russia and the U.S. took their approximately 1,800 warheads off high-alert, ready to launch within minutes of threats being supposedly detected.

If other countries abandoned interest in things like tactical nuclear weapons that have to be deployed on the forward edges of potential battlefields and require some pre-delegation of authority to use to battlefield commanders. Because any use of nuclear weapons could be catastrophic for planet Earth, the decision must be restricted to the highest political and military authorities.

• *Risk minimization*• .

There is no national security objectives that Russia and the U.S. could not meet with a total arsenal of under 500 nuclear warheads each deployed in the air (a few), on land (some), and at sea (most). And if all the others froze their arsenals at current levels, this would give us a global stockpile of 2,000 bombs instead of the current total of nearly 16,400.

Ratifying and bringing into force the CTBT, concluding a new fissile material cutoff treaty, banning the nuclear weaponization of outer space, respecting one another's sensitivities on missile defense programs and conventional military imbalances etc. would all contribute to minimizing risks of reversals and setbacks.

None of these steps would jeopardize the national security of any of the nuclear-armed states; each would enhance regional and international security modestly; all in combination would greatly strengthen global security.

•*Risk elimination.*•

Successive blue ribbon international commissions, from the Canberra Commission through the Tokyo Forum, Blix Commission, and Evans-Kawaguchi Commission, have emphatically reaffirmed three core propositions.

As long as any state has nuclear weapons, others will want them. As long as they exist, they will be used again someday, if not by design and intent, then through miscalculation, accident, rogue launch or system malfunction. Any such use anywhere could spell catastrophe for the planet.

The only guarantee of zero nuclear weapons risk, therefore, is to move to zero nuclear weapons possession by a carefully managed process.

Ramesh Thakur is director of the Center for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament, The Australian National University. "Nuclear Weapons: The State of Play 2015," written by Gareth Evans, Tanya Ogilvie-White, and Ramesh Thakur, can be downloaded for free from:

cnnd.crawford.anu.edu.au/sites/default/files/publication/cnnd_crawford_anu_edu_au/2015-02/printer_copy.pdf

Why Japan can't support Austrian ban

March 13, 2015

Because of U.S. nuclear umbrella, Japan not to support Austrian document seeking atomic weapons ban

Kyodo

NEW YORK – Japan does not plan to support a document circulated among U.N. members that calls for a ban on nuclear weapons, after the United States, its security ally and provider of nuclear deterrence, urged it not to, government and diplomatic sources said Thursday.

The paper has been distributed by Austria, which hosted an international meeting on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons in December. Hoping to add impetus to the debate on banning nuclear weapons, Austria plans to submit it to a U.N. conference held from next month to review the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty.

As the only country to have suffered atomic bombing, Japan has pushed for the adoption at the U.N. General Assembly every year of a resolution calling on states to take action toward the elimination of nuclear weapons.

But because the Austrian paper calls for a treaty banning and eliminating nuclear weapons, the Japanese government has found it inappropriate to support the document, given the need for consistency with the country's reliance on the U.S. nuclear umbrella, the sources said.

"The time is not yet ripe for negotiating" such a pact, a government official said.

A U.S. State Department official said Washington will not back the paper, citing the need to pursue "a more pragmatic approach that represents a consensus view" of countries subscribing to the NPT.

The Japanese stance on the document, however, is likely to disappoint atomic-bomb survivors in the country who have planned to call for a nuclear weapons ban treaty when the NPT review conference is held in New York from April 27 to May 22.

In mid-January, Austria asked U.N. members to express their support for its document, which it titled the "Austrian Pledge."

In the paper, Austria calls on all NPT members to "identify and pursue effective measures to fill the legal gap for the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons," citing the "unacceptable humanitarian consequences and associated risks" of nuclear weapons.

But the Japanese Foreign Ministry has determined that the content of the document "crosses a red line," according to the sources. It is instead considering conveying to Austria Tokyo's intention of cooperating with it in making the upcoming NPT review conference successful and promoting nuclear disarmament. The sources said a senior U.S. official who visited Japan in February had urged Japanese officials not to support the paper.

The United States has similarly urged some members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, such as Norway, not to support the Austrian document. Norway is actively engaged in discussions about the inhumane nature of nuclear weapons.

The paper has so far won consent from about 50 countries. Austria's Foreign Ministry has said the countries do not include those possessing nuclear weapons or those under the protection of countries with nuclear weapons.

What does Putin's threat mean?

March 17, 2015

Editorial: Putin's nuclear threats are unforgivable

<http://mainichi.jp/english/english/perspectives/news/20150317p2a00m0na013000c.html>

In a shocking statement, Russian President Vladimir Putin asserted that when Russia unilaterally annexed the Crimean peninsula on March 18 last year, he had been prepared to put Russia's nuclear arsenal to a state of alert to ward off any action by the United States or NATO forces.

To mark the one year anniversary since Russia announced the annexation, Russian state-run media broadcast a documentary that it produced on March 15. In an interview featured in the documentary, Putin stated that he had ordered troops to be prepared to deal with "all possible situations." Asked if that meant he had been prepared to put the country's nuclear arsenal on alert, he replied that that indeed was the case.

It is believed that through such statements, Putin intended to show a firm stand against Western criticism of Russia's annexation of Crimea, and to garner support from Russians by **demonstrating that he was a strong leader**. Another reason he hinted at the possibility of using nuclear weapons was probably to keep the U.S. and European countries from taking any hostile action. In effect, it was a threat.

As the West and Russia bump heads over Ukraine, statements like those given by Putin put the crisis at risk of escalation. Russia is a permanent member of the U.N. Security Council and **such statements from the leader of a country that has grave responsibilities in world security are unforgivable**.

The annexation of Crimea constituted a unilateral change in national borders through military force. Even if the act had the support of local residents, it trampled on Ukraine's sovereignty and violated international laws. This is why countries in the West and Japan have imposed economic sanctions against Russia and demanded a change in Russia's policies toward Ukraine. Russia, however, has taken an increasingly hardline stance.

At a gathering with students last August, Putin stated that Russia was a nuclear giant -- a remark that could be interpreted as an attempt to intimidate the West. On March 11, a senior official at the Russian foreign ministry said that Russia has the right to deploy nuclear weapons to Crimea. Putin's statement became public soon afterward.

Russia needs to realize how dangerous and risky it is to so blatantly show off its nuclear arsenal. As the status of the U.S. as the world's only superpower crumbles and China flexes its military muscles, international order has grown more and more unstable. **What we need in the face of conflict is not for countries to needlessly incite further tension, but to make constructive efforts to overcome it.**

The 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) will take place next month. Non-nuclear states are not going to go easy on nuclear states. At a time when the world seeks more efforts to reduce nuclear weapons, to flaunt one's nuclear edge to get what one wants is **an act of betrayal against the international community**.

March 17, 2015(Mainichi Japan)

Nagasaki Hibakushas outraged by Putin's remarks

March 19, 2015

Nagasaki A-bomb survivors protest Putin's nuclear arsenal remarks

http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/politics/AJ201503190045

THE ASAHI SHIMBUN

NAGASAKI--Hibakusha organizations in Nagasaki Prefecture expressed outrage over Russian President Vladimir Putin's recent remarks about possibly having nuclear weapons at the ready.

The five atomic bomb survivor groups sent a written protest on March 18 to the Russian Embassy in Tokyo. They also called on the government to protest Putin's remarks in a TV documentary show aired on March 15 that alluded to Russia's readiness to have a nuclear arsenal on alert last year at the time of its annexation of Crimea.

"(In marking the 70th anniversary of the atomic bombing this year), the remarks fundamentally trampled on the wishes of atomic bomb victims in Nagasaki Prefecture to renew their determination to eliminate nuclear weapons," the letter to Putin said.

It also condemned the Russian president, saying that putting a nuclear arsenal on alert was wrong.

The letter urged Putin to rescind his remarks, which the hibakusha groups said was tantamount to a nuclear threat.

In letters addressed to Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida, the groups vented their frustration over the government's inaction with regard to Moscow's behavior by saying, "We cannot help but doubt the government's stance toward nuclear weapons."

Putin's remarks disrespectful to A-bomb victims

March 18, 2015

VOX POPULI: Putin's nuclear comment dishonors memory of Japan's A-bomb victims

<http://ajw.asahi.com/article/views/vox/AJ201503180032>

Vox Populi, Vox Dei is a daily column that runs on Page 1 of The Asahi Shimbun.

Spring was in the air when I went to the National Archives of Japan in Tokyo the other day for an exhibition titled "JFK: His Life and Legacy." This interesting exhibition about U.S. President John F. Kennedy (1917-1963) includes a section on the Cuban Missile Crisis of October 1962--those 13 days when "humanity came to the brink of nuclear conflict."

The Cold War was raging, and international tensions heightened like never before when it was discovered that the Soviet Union had built a missile base in Cuba. Official memos from that time show that the White House considered the option of an armed attack on the base. But the crisis was averted at the last moment and the world was spared a nuclear war.

I had just returned from the exhibition when I heard the deeply shocking statement by Russian President Vladimir Putin on television to the effect that Russia was ready to bring its nuclear arsenal to a state of alert at the time of Russia's annexation of Crimea.

I imagine his comment was meant as a warning to the United States and Europe. But one would expect the threat of nuclear deployment to come from some sleazy outlaw, not from the leader of a superpower. Putin apparently feels he is expected to play the hardcore, tough guy. His macho words and deeds, as manifested in the forcible annexation of Crimea, have created the image of a "formidable Russia." His popularity remains strong in his country.

But this has also resulted in his isolation from the international community. The Americans and the Europeans are further tightening their guard.

Putin's remark cannot possibly be acceptable to anyone who has been calling for the elimination of nuclear weapons to avert a "third tragedy."

Let me quote this heartfelt poem by Tsutomu Yamaguchi (1916-2010), a survivor of both the Hiroshima and Nagasaki atomic bombings: "May the black rain never fall again/ So that humans can keep praying for peace under the blue sky."

March 18 marks the first anniversary of the annexation of Crimea. It makes me feel as if the clock has been turned back to before World War II rather than the Cold War era.

The souls of the victims of Hiroshima and Nagasaki cannot rest in peace.

--The Asahi Shimbun, March 18

* * *

Vox Populi, Vox Dei is a popular daily column that takes up a wide range of topics, including culture, arts and social trends and developments. Written by veteran Asahi Shimbun writers, the column provides useful perspectives on and insights into contemporary Japan and its culture.

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Moscow should cease playing with fire

March 20, 2015

Dangerous nuclear rhetoric

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2015/03/20/editorials/dangerous-nuclear-rhetoric/#.VQwzZ-F1Cos>

Russian President Vladimir Putin told a recent TV program that Moscow was ready to put its nuclear forces on alert to cope with the possible intervention by NATO when the pro-Moscow Ukrainian government of Viktor Yanukovich was brought down and pro-Western elements seized power in Kiev in February 2014.

What he disclosed can be taken to mean that Russia was ready to threaten the United States and European nations over the Ukraine crisis with nuclear arms. It would be extremely irresponsible of Russia — a nuclear-weapons state and a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council — to use its nuclear weapons as a threat. Putin should seek to resolve Russia's conflicts with its neighbors through diplomacy and pledge never to resort to threats of nuclear warfare.

The Russian president made the remark in a recorded March 15 documentary called "Crimea: the Road to the Motherland," broadcast by the state-run Rossiya 1 channel prior to the first anniversary on March 21 of Russia's annexation of Crimea. Reversing his earlier statement that he decided to annex Crimea only after its March 16, 2014, referendum, he said that two days after the Feb. 21 fall of Yanukovich's government, he told his security chiefs that it was time to start preparing for the annexation.

He said his "closed opinion poll" showed that 75 percent of the Crimean population wanted the Black Sea peninsula to join Russia. He also said he sent thousands of military intelligence special forces, marines and paratroopers to secure the territory from Ukrainian soldiers.

The annexation violated Ukraine's territorial integrity and is against international law. Putin justified his action: "I was speaking with colleagues and said, 'Frankly, this is our historical territory and Russian people live there, they were in danger, and we cannot abandon them.' "

If such logic is accepted, it could be applied to other former Soviet republics that have become independent.

As for the nuclear alert, Putin said, "We were ready to do that" when he was asked whether there was the possibility of putting the Russian nuclear arsenal on alert to cope with possible military intervention by the West.

Although he said he was preparing for "the worst-case scenario," his statements appear to ignore Russia's duty to tackle nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation with sincerity as a country that, together with the U.S., accounts for more than 90 percent of the world's nuclear warheads.

And four days before the documentary aired, Mikhail Ulyanov, director of the Russian Foreign Ministry's Department for Non-Proliferation and Arms Control, stated that Russia in principle has the right to deploy nuclear arms in Crimea.

As Ukraine gave up the nuclear weapons it inherited from the Soviet Union when it joined the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty in 1994 and that Russia has enough powerful conventional weapons to apply diplomatic pressure on the West, the attitudes of Putin and Ulyanov are utterly inappropriate.

The Russian president's remarks could have undesirable effects on U.S.-Russia negotiations to reduce strategic nuclear weapons as well as the U.S.-led talks over missile defense in Europe. The remarks could also give North Korea, which is pursuing a nuclear-weapons program, and Iran, which is negotiating with the U.S., Russia and four other countries over its nuclear program, further cause either to distrust the nuclear-weapons states or to view nuclear arms as a powerful tool of diplomacy. Russia's influence in the talks with North Korea and Iran could be weakened.

The remarks by both Putin and Ulyanov run completely counter to the international moves toward nuclear-weapons reduction and nuclear nonproliferation.

They may think that talking up Russia's nuclear forces will help increase its influence in international politics, but such rhetoric will only have a destabilizing effect. Moscow should realize the importance of making steady and levelheaded efforts to bring peace and stability to areas plagued by conflict, and cease playing the nuclear card.

Limited nuclear war: How likely?

March 23, 2015

Japan Political Pulse: Shadows of a limited nuclear war

<http://mainichi.jp/english/english/perspectives/news/20150323p2a00m0na007000c.html>

It seems we have arrived in an age in which we have to rethink the post-Cold War perception that nuclear weapons can't actually be used.

In an interview on Russian state television on March 15, Russian President Vladimir Putin disclosed that his country was prepared to use nuclear weapons when it took Crimea from Ukraine, depending on the moves taken by the West.

I brought this issue up with a nuclear strategy specialist, who told me that regardless of how Putin's remarks are perceived, the possibility of a "limited nuclear war" is rising.

No doubt Putin's statement is one step in the ongoing maneuvering between Russia and the West. One high-ranking official from Japan's Ministry of Defense surmised, "(Putin) was playing poker, anticipating the West's distaste for using the nuclear card." But he didn't arrive at that strategy all of a sudden.

Addressing a gathering of citizens in August last year, Putin had sharp words for the U.S. and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Regarding the situation in Crimea, he said, "Russia is one of the leading nuclear powers," and warned, "It's best not to mess with us." He also said Russia was strengthening its nuclear deterrence and armed forces, making them more compact, efficient and modern. (His comments were reported in Japanese in the Aug. 30, 2014 evening edition of the Mainichi Shimbun.) High-stakes poker game or no, people say that the nuclear threat is increasing. Last year a book titled "On Limited Nuclear War in the 21st Century" was published. One of the authors is a Research Division Director at the NATO Defense College in Rome. Experts around the world have focused more on the real possibility of a limited nuclear war, and there is a growing worldwide trend to reconsider the issue.

One nuclear strategy researcher I previously interviewed noted that Russia's position supporting use of nuclear weapons, if it came down to it, was part of the Russian Federation's longstanding military doctrine, and nothing to be surprised at. I asked this researcher several questions and he replied as follows:

Q: Hasn't the threat of nuclear war decreased?

A: The number of nuclear warheads decreased significantly after the Cold War, but the number of nuclear-armed countries increased. And we're talking about possession of nuclear weapons by countries that could become involved in war -- India, Pakistan, Israel, North Korea and so on. Even if there is not a full-scale war resulting in the annihilation of humankind, we have to say that the possibility of nuclear weapons being used is increasing.

Q: Is it possible that terrorists could use nuclear weapons?

A: We don't know -- that's all I can say.

Q: Wasn't there an outflow of nuclear weapons when the Soviet Union collapsed?

A: To use a major power's nuclear weapons, the arming codes need to be deciphered. But even if they can't be deciphered and nuclear fission can't be triggered, the weapon can be blown up, spreading the radioactive materials inside. Still, there have been no such incidents more than 20 years after the end of the Cold War. Of course, in the case of nuclear weapons flowing out of Pakistan or North Korea, questions remain over their detonation control measures, and there's no telling what could happen.

Nuclear bombs were first built in the United States in 1945 and dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The Soviet Union also developed them and the two superpowers came to brink of nuclear war during the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962.

Stanley Kubrick depicted the tension in his 1964 film "Dr. Strangelove or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb." Even now we can see in this film a proper understanding of radioactive materials. In contrast, the 2002 film "The Sum of All Fears" portrays major characters suffering only minor scratches in a nuclear bomb blast. There is practically no depiction of the fiery hell one might rightly expect. Such scenes would be absurd for a Japanese person knowing the real situation.

A limited nuclear war could happen. Japanese have a responsibility to correct absurd views of nuclear conflict that imagine all the major characters emerging with mere scratches. (By Takao Yamada, Special Senior Writer)

March 23, 2015(Mainichi Japan)

Yes to a nuclear-free world! Yes to Peace!

http://org.salsalabs.com/o/161/p/dia/action3/common/public/?action_KEY=17496

Sign the Peace and Planet Nuclear Weapons Abolition Petition!

This April, most of the world's governments meet at the United Nations for the month-long Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference. Peace Action is part of an international movement to abolish nuclear weapons and here's an opportunity to join with people all over the world calling for zero nuclear weapons!

In a demonstration of our determination to build a fair, democratic, ecologically sustainable, and peaceful future, people will gather in New York City and around the world for international days of action April 24

– 26, 2015, just before the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference at the United Nations.

We call upon the parties to the NPT to use the 2015 Review Conference to immediately, without delay, develop a timetable to ban and eliminate all nuclear weapons.

We call upon the four states outside the Treaty that have nuclear arms, India, Israel, North Korea, and Pakistan, to join this process, immediately and without delay.

We are at a crucial juncture, a time when the unresolved tensions of a deeply inequitable society, great power ambitions, and the destructive effects of an unsustainable economic system are exploding into overlapping crises.

Yes to a Nuclear-Free World!

Yes to Nonviolence!

Yes to Economic Justice and Environmental Sustainability!

Yes to Peace!!

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Message from bomb survivors to Israelis

March 26, 2015

In message to Israelis, Japanese wartime victims detail horrors of bombings

http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/social_affairs/AJ201503260079

By TAKASHI WATANABE/ Correspondent

JERUSALEM--Japanese survivors of U.S. bombing attacks in World War II urged the people of Israel to understand the tremendous damage inflicted on civilian populations during wartime.

Speaking at a March 23 gathering in Jerusalem before about 20 people, Atsuko Uehara, a 77-year-old from Tokyo, told of her experiences when B-29 bombers dropped incendiaries on the Japanese capital on March 10, 1945, leaving 100,000 people dead and reducing a vast area to ashes.

Also telling his wartime tale was Michimasa Hirata, a 79-year-old hibakusha victim of the Aug. 6, 1945, atomic bombing of Hiroshima.

The session was part of gatherings and academic conferences themed on the Great Tokyo Air Raid and the nuclear attack on Hiroshima that were held through March 25 in Israel.

Since the end of World War II, millions of civilians have been killed in wars and conflicts across the globe. In battles last summer between the Israeli military and Hamas, the Islamist organization that effectively controls the Gaza Strip, more than 2,100 civilians were reportedly killed. More than 70 Israeli citizens also died in the conflict.

"I hope this conference will remind us again how easily moral barriers can be broken in war and why it is important to keep them," said Rotem Kowner, a Japanese history professor at the University of Haifa in the northern part of Israel.

The university first proposed an academic conference about the Tokyo air raid.

Kowner said the destruction caused by the March 10, 1945, air raid should be more widely known globally.

In fact, some of those attending the March 23 session were surprised that the Tokyo air raid was not as well known as the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, despite the massive scale of destruction of the capital.

Others pointed out that the aerial attack was different from the atomic bombing in that conventional weapons were used.

Sharon Dolev, a 45-year-old director of Israeli Disarmament Movement that organized the session, said the Israeli people need to deliberate about their country's own stockpile of nuclear weapons.

"It is important not just to talk about Iran, as we do in Israel, but also about our own arsenal and understand what happens to the people it might affect," she said. "Seventy years after the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the hibakusha are aging, and sadly, soon, we won't be able to hear them directly and talk to them."

Although Israel does not officially acknowledge that it possesses nuclear weapons, it is widely recognized that it does.

“We think it is crucial for Israelis to break the taboo around this topic in Israel. Listening to hibakusha is one important way,” Dolev said.

The participants also asked Uehara and Hirata if they have received any compensation and what their feelings are toward the United States, Japan’s wartime enemy.

Also speaking at an academic conference on March 25 was 74-year-old Masao Sato, who escaped the Tokyo firebombing while being carried on the back of his 15-year-old sister. Sato recalled seeing many bodies on the ground as he and his sister fled to safer ground.

After the end of the war, Sato was employed by a trading company and spent many years working abroad. He said he became interested in the history of Israel after he visited the Auschwitz concentration camp in Poland and other wartime facilities.

“The Holocaust and the Great Tokyo Air Raid are the same in that ordinary people were slaughtered for no reason,” Sato said.

Angola 164th state to ratify CTBT

ANGOLA RATIFIES THE COMPREHENSIVE NUCLEAR-TEST-BAN TREATY

Vienna, 20 March 2015

VIENNA – Angola has become the 164th State to ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). The instrument of ratification was deposited in New York on 20 March 2015.

Lassina Zerbo, Executive Secretary of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO), applauded the step: “I congratulate Angola on its ratification of the CTBT. It is a powerful message of peace to Africa and to the world. This development is an unequivocal reminder of Angola’s commitment towards creating an Africa free of nuclear weapons, as an essential component of a nuclear-weapons-free world.”

Angola signed the CTBT on 27 September 1996, just three days after it opened for signature. Today’s ratification follows the announcement by Angola at the September 2013 Article XIV Conference that the Angolan Council of Ministers had transmitted the CTBT to the National Assembly for its consideration of ratification in April 2013. Angola has also shown its support for the Treaty by regularly voting in favour of the CTBT at the United Nations General Assembly.

With a population of almost 21 million, Angola’s ratification is significant. Adherence to the Treaty is almost universal, with 183 States having signed the Treaty to date. In Africa, only three countries have yet to sign the CTBT — Mauritius, South Sudan and Somalia — whereas seven countries have yet to ratify: the Comoros, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, The Gambia, Sao Tome and Principe, Swaziland and Zimbabwe.

Among the remaining African States, only Egypt’s ratification is mandatory for the Treaty to enter into force. Ratification by seven other nuclear capable countries from outside Africa is also required, namely:

China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, India, Iran, Israel, Pakistan and the United States; see interactive map.

African States have already banned nuclear weapons on their continent through the Pelindaba Treaty, which established a nuclear-weapon-free zone on the continent. Angola has signed the Pelindaba Treaty, which entered into force in 2009.

The CTBT bans all nuclear explosions everywhere, by everyone. The CTBTO is building an International Monitoring System (IMS) to make sure that no nuclear explosion goes undetected. Currently, around 90% of this network has been established, including 31 facilities in 22 African countries. CTBTO monitoring data also have non-verification uses such as earthquake monitoring, tsunami warning, and the tracking of radioactivity from nuclear accidents.

For further information on the CTBT, please see www.ctbto.org - your resource on ending nuclear testing, or contact:

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Japan and Korean Peninsula a nuclear weapons-free zone?

April 8, 2015

Nagasaki research center proposes nuclear weapons-free zone

http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/social_affairs/AJ201504080040

By HAJIMU TAKEDA/ Staff Writer

A leading nuclear disarmament institute has proposed that Japan and the Korean Peninsula declare themselves as nuclear weapons-free zones.

The proposal was made by the Nagasaki University Research Center for Nuclear Weapons Abolition. "It would help Japan to exit from the United States' nuclear umbrella and strengthen its voice for abolishing nuclear weapons," Hiromichi Umeyayashi, until recently a director of the center, told a news conference in Tokyo on April 7.

The proposal, titled "A comprehensive approach to a Northeast Asia nuclear weapons-free zone," will be presented at a symposium to be held May 8 during the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which starts April 27 in New York.

“North Korea’s nuclear-arms development has triggered Japan and South Korea to increase dependence on the U.S. nuclear deterrence, which hampers efforts for realizing a world without nuclear weapons,” states the proposal.

The proposal hinges on a deal between six countries: Japan, South Korea and North Korea would promise to refrain from research on or production of nuclear weapons, while the three nuclear states--the United States, China and Russia--would guarantee not to target them with nuclear weapons.

Five nuclear-free zones--which prohibit the stationing, development and use of nuclear weapons inside the designated territory--currently exist in the world, including areas in Latin America and Africa.

In an effort to promote a nuclear weapons-free world, the Nagasaki research center plans to hold a discussion forum during the NPT conference in New York, and has invited Morton Halperin, a foreign-policy expert who has served as a special assistant to U.S. President Bill Clinton, officials at the center said.

Have they "lost their power to shock"?

April 7, 2015

Relearning to love nuclear weapons

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2015/04/07/commentary/world-commentary/relearning-to-love-nuclear-weapons/#.VSRLTJPwmos>

by Gareth Evans

The shocking thing about nuclear weapons is that they seem to have lost their power to shock. While the nuclear deal that was just reached with Iran in Lausanne might suggest otherwise and is very good news, that effort should not obscure the bad news elsewhere. The momentum toward a nuclear-weapon-free world driven by U.S. President Barack Obama’s landmark 2009 speech in Prague, having faltered for the last few years, has now gone into sharp reverse.

President Vladimir Putin recently announced his readiness to put Russian nuclear forces on alert last year when Russia annexed Crimea, and even signaled plans to “surprise the West with our new developments in offensive nuclear weapons.” The world barely stirred. Meanwhile, China and India are steadily increasing the size of their nuclear arsenals, and Pakistan is doing so even faster, even spelling out plans to combine battlefield nukes with conventional weapons. Again, the world shrugs.

For its part, the United States plans to spend \$355 billion upgrading and modernizing its vast nuclear arsenal over the next 10 years. Far from moving toward disarmament, the intention seems to be to maintain and enhance every component of America’s current land, sea and airborne nuclear capability. There was more amusement than alarm at a conference of 800 nuclear specialists in Washington in March, when a senior U.S. Air Force general, eerily channeling George C. Scott in “Dr. Strangelove,” offered a nostrils-bared defense of “an ability to allow no adversary to have sanctuary anywhere in the world.” Spooked by Russia’s incursions into Ukraine, North Korea’s erratic intransigence and China’s new foreign-policy assertiveness, U.S. allies and partners in East Asia and Europe have rushed back to unthinking

embrace of Cold War assumptions about the deterrent utility of nuclear weapons and their central importance in security policy.

As my colleagues and I put it in our book-length report *Nuclear Weapons: The State of Play 2015*, launched in Geneva, Vienna and Washington in February: “On the evidence of the size of their weapons arsenals, fissile material stocks, force modernization plans, stated doctrine and known deployment practices, all nine nuclear-armed states foresee indefinite retention of nuclear weapons and a continuing role for them in their security policies.”

All of this has serious implications for the five-year review conference of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), scheduled to begin in New York in late April. The NPT has been the single most crucial factor in limiting the world’s nuclear-armed states to the current nine, rather than the 20-30 widely feared a generation ago. But its credibility now hangs by a thread.

The NPT, after all, is based on a bargain: States that do not possess nuclear weapons promise not to acquire them, in exchange for a pledge by those that do to move seriously toward eliminating their arsenals. And recent developments have once again jeopardized that bargain, with many states again asking why, if the U.S., Russia and others need nuclear weapons, they do not.

Given such sentiments, it will prove almost impossible at the review conference to build a consensus in favor of further necessary strengthening of the non-proliferation regime, with improved safeguards, export controls, security disciplines and sanctions against withdrawal from the treaty. The irrationality of such resistance is not likely to weaken it.

Not all the news is bleak. Aside from the Iran negotiations, other arms control cooperation is continuing, including between the U.S. and Russia over the New START treaty to reduce strategic deployments, and over chemical weapons in Syria. Despite lack of any visible progress toward ridding the Middle East of weapons of mass destruction, the signs are encouraging that Egypt and others in the region want to keep trying, and will not use the issue of a WMD-free zone to blow up the review conference, as had been feared.

Most encouraging of all, a major new international movement is gathering pace to focus policy attention on the horrific humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons, and to create the conditions for a treaty to ban them once and for all. Since 2012, major conferences have been hosted by Norway, Mexico and Austria, and more than 155 states have pledged support for appropriate action, with only the nuclear-armed states and their allies and partners dragging their feet.

The nuclear-armed states will not sign on any time soon to any treaty that bans the use of their weapons under all circumstances. They will resist even more strongly the outright elimination of their weapons, given that the world is probably still decades away from devising sufficient verification and enforcement measures.

But if the NPT review conference is not to end in tears, with all the accompanying risks for world order that failure would entail, the five nuclear-armed states that are NPT signatories can and must be prepared to bring more to the table than they have so far. Baby steps — improving their transparency in reporting, or agreeing on the meaning of technical terms like “strategic,” “deployed,” and “reserve” — will not begin to satisfy the many NPT countries that have been appalled by the recent re-emergence of Cold War mindsets and behavior.

The nuclear-armed states can and should make serious commitments to dramatic further reductions in the size of their arsenals; hold the number of weapons physically deployed and ready for immediate launch to an absolute minimum; and change their strategic doctrines to limit the role and salience of nuclear weapons, ideally by committing to “no first use.”

Most important, they should agree on indicative target dates — from five to 15 years — for achieving all of these initial objectives. Deadlines have been indispensable for achieving sustainable-development and carbon-reduction goals: saving the world from the threat of nuclear annihilation is hardly a less urgent and important objective.

Gareth Evans was foreign minister of Australia from 1988-1996, co-chaired the International Commission on Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament 2009, and is co-author of "Nuclear Weapons: The State of Play 2015." © Project Syndicate, 2015.

Kishida to attend NPT meeting

April 8, 2015

Foreign minister to deliver anti-nuclear arms message at U.N. NPT conference

<http://mainichi.jp/english/english/newsselect/news/20150408p2a00m0na018000c.html>

Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida said he is eager to carry the anti-nuclear weapons message from Hiroshima and Nagasaki to a United Nations conference scheduled to start in New York on April 27. During an April 7 interview -- ahead of the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) -- Kishida told the Mainichi Shimbun and other news media that he is to make a speech on the first day of the conference.

"I will embed messages from Hiroshima and Nagasaki into the speech to carry realistic and practical strategies for a world without nuclear weapons forward," Kishida commented. Hiroshima and Nagasaki were both devastated by U.S. atomic bombs in August 1945.

Kishida, a House of Representatives member elected from a Hiroshima Prefecture constituency, is the first Japanese foreign minister in 10 years to attend an NPT meeting.

In March this year, the Japanese government presented a plan for an agreement on nuclear non-proliferation to the U.N. The plan had been worked out by the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI) formed by 12 member countries, including Japan, that do not possess nuclear arms. The NPDI proposed in the plan to request multi-party arms reduction negotiations among nuclear powers, as well as transparency over the size of their weapons stockpiles. The plan further requests all of the countries that have ratified the NPT to take concrete actions toward nuclear arms reductions and non-proliferation.

Kishida told interviewers that Japan has received positive feedback from many nations, adding that the country will push harder to include the plan as the pillar of the NPT conference final agreement.

Asked about a move among non-nuclear powers, such as Austria, to demand that negotiations be initiated on a convention banning nuclear weapons, Kishida said, "It may appear as a detour, but I believe taking realistic approaches will eventually lead to a shortcut (to nuclear disarmament)."

April 08, 2015(Mainichi Japan)

Sign the petition



from Beyond Nuclear :

Sign global ban on uranium, nuclear power and atomic weapons!

A joint statement by the more than 250 participants from five continents at the recent World Uranium Symposium in Quebec City, Canada calls for a ban on every phase of the uranium fuel chain; an end to the use of nuclear power; and the elimination of nuclear weapons. Please sign the declaration at this link where the full declaration can also be found.

<http://uranium2015.com/en/news/quebec-declaration-uranium>

The world has changed since Obama's pledge for a nuclear-free world

April 25, 2015

Nuclear abolition resolve weakens

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2015/04/25/national/nuclear-abolition-resolve-weakens/#.VTt9ZJPwmos>

Kyodo

NEW YORK – In the lead-up to the last Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) review conference in 2010, the world was buoyed by U.S. President Barack Obama's pledge to seek a nuclear-free world, but five years on hopes have been dashed that atomic arms will be abolished anytime soon, the U.N. disarmament head said.

“Since the 2010 last review conference, the world has changed,” Angela Kane, the high representative for disarmament affairs, said in an interview ahead of the once-every-five-years conference that kicks off Monday.

Citing a host of political and humanitarian crises that have taken root in the Middle East, Ukraine and elsewhere since then, she said she believes top leaders and disarmament experts will face a difficult time during the more than three-week-long conference.

Britain, China, France and Russia along with the United States form the nuclear weapon states that are party to the treaty.

With roughly 190 countries having signed, the NPT is a landmark international treaty that sets out to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and technology, as well as to promote cooperation in pursuing the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. It also aims ultimately to achieve nuclear disarmament.

India, Pakistan and Israel are not parties to the treaty but are acknowledged to possess nuclear weapons.

North Korea, which is known to have conducted three rounds of underground nuclear tests, the last one in 2013, says it has withdrawn from the treaty.

The high representative also pointed to **the divide that exists between nuclear and nonnuclear weapon states, with the latter having signed on refraining from acquiring the destructive devices in the belief they would negotiate for nuclear disarmament.**

She also emphasized the essential role that Japanese atomic bomb victims, known as hibakusha, play in sharing their experiences to press for change through their testimonies at such gatherings.

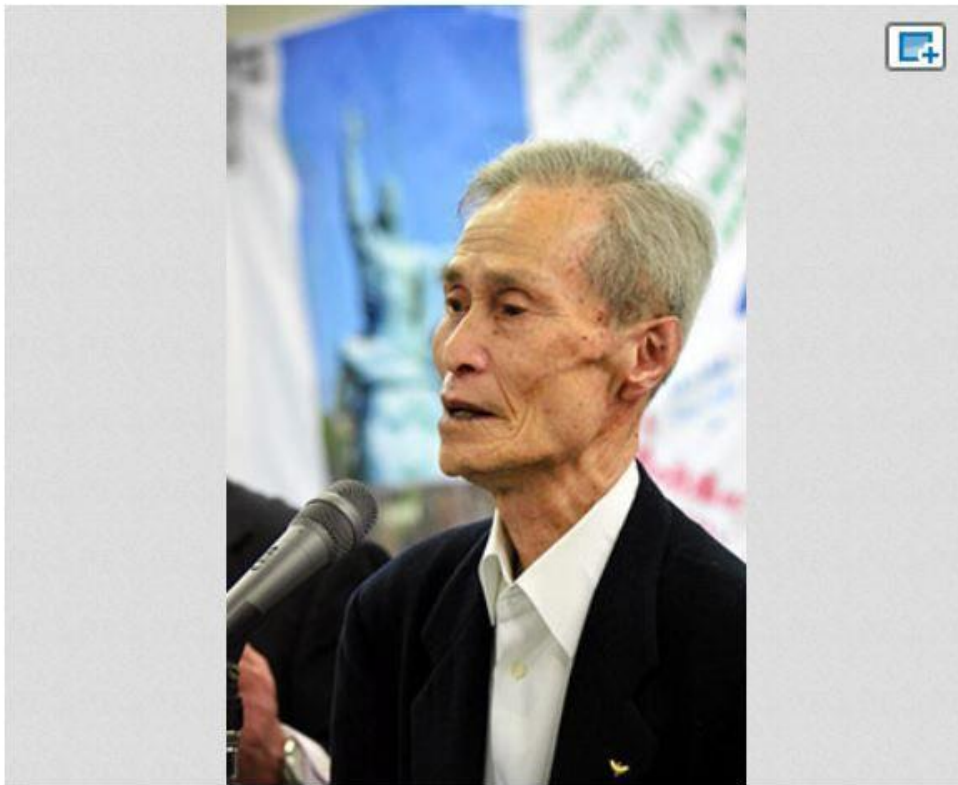
“It is a good that the hibakusha and also Japan are making such strong efforts to bring it back to people’s memories, to remind them of the horrors of the effects of such an explosion,” she noted.

Taniguchi makes it to New York

April 26, 2015

A-bomb survivor on what may be his last quest to seek nuke weapons ban

http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/social_affairs/AJ201504260018



Sumiteru Taniguchi, an 86-year-old atomic bomb survivor, speaks at his send-off ceremony in Nagasaki on April 18. (Shohei Okada)

THE ASAHI SHIMBUN

NAGASAKI--Despite his frail condition, 86-year-old atomic bomb survivor Sumiteru Taniguchi is making what is likely his final trip to New York to appeal to the United Nations for a world free of nuclear weapons.

"I would like to continue taking part in anti-nuclear campaigns by calling on the spirits of hibakusha who have passed away without seeing a nuclear-free world," said Taniguchi, who was in Nagasaki when the city was leveled by atomic bombing on Aug. 9, 1945.

Taniguchi was speaking at an April 18 ceremony to send off a Nagasaki citizens delegation to the United States to coincide with the start of ninth U.N. Nonproliferation Treaty review conference.

Taking place every five years to review efforts to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons, the conference will be held at the U.N. headquarters between April 27 and May 22.

At the last conference in 2010, Taniguchi, chairman of the Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Survivors Council, delivered a compelling speech that asserted the world needs "no more hibakusha after me."

During his trip to the United States this time, Taniguchi has been invited to speak about his experience as an A-bomb survivor and make his "no more hibakusha" appeal at a symposium sponsored by nongovernmental organizations on April 25.

With 2015 marking the 70th anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the end of World War II, the average age of the hibakusha reached 79.44 at the end of March last year.

Taniguchi has recently battled with pneumonia and symptoms of aging. He currently weighs only 41 kilograms, and his fellow activists are concerned about his ability to endure the long flight to the United States this month.

On Aug. 9, 1945, Taniguchi, then 16, was working as a letter carrier about 1.8 kilometers from ground zero when the atomic bomb detonated. He suffered extensive burns on his back, which left him bedridden for 21 months.

His back has extensive keloids and operational scars.

Since the last NPT conference, Taniguchi has seen his fellow A-bomb survivors die one after another, including Senji Yamaguchi and Hisako Akesaka, leaders of anti-nuclear movements in Nagasaki.

“Yamaguchi and Akesaka must be lamenting in heaven over the current international circumstances (that have allowed the omnipresence of nuclear weapons),” Taniguchi said.

SUCCEEDING SPIRITS

Although atomic bomb survivors are rapidly advancing in age, the postwar generation residents of Hiroshima and Nagasaki are eager to pass on the experiences of their parents’ generation.

Michiko Yamaoka, a 64-year-old resident of Hiroshima, is a member of the delegation that Gensuikyo (Japan Council Against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs) is sending to the United States at the time of the U.N. conference.

Yamaoka's 90-year-old mother, Kiyoko Ueda, survived the Aug. 6, 1945, atomic bombing of Hiroshima. Ueda's family residence was about 3.5 km from ground zero. Her sister, 13, died that day.

Growing up hearing horrendous stories from her mother, Yamaoka was inspired to become a volunteer English guide for foreign visitors to Hiroshima when she turned 57.

Acquiring English skills through self-education, she has worked as a guide to explain the experiences of her mother to as many as 10,000 foreign visitors from 90 countries.

During her U.S. visit, Yamaoka will participate in a signature-collecting drive on city streets and in anti-nuclear rallies.

If she is asked about the feelings of the hibakusha toward the United States, Yamaoka said she will convey a message from her mother: “Hibakusha only hate warfare, not the United States. Peace will not arise from hatred.”

Kishida in New York

April 27, 2015

Foreign minister to call for world leaders to visit Hiroshima, Nagasaki at U.N. conference

http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/social_affairs/AJ201504270053



Japanese citizens join an anti-nuclear weapons rally in New York on April 26 to mark the start of the ninth Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty review conference on April 27.
(Shinnosuke Ito)

THE ASAHI SHIMBUN

Japan plans to call for nations with atomic weapons to ensure transparency of their nuclear arms programs and move forward with nuclear disarmament talks at a United Nations conference in New York that opens April 27.

Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida, a Hiroshima native, is also expected to encourage the political leaders of other nations to visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki at the ninth conference to review the U.N. Treaty on the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

"This year marks the 70th anniversary of the atomic bombings (of Hiroshima and Nagasaki)," Kishida, who will speak at the conference, has said.

"As a foreign minister from a bombed city, I will work to take matters one, or even two, steps further toward a nuclear-free world."

It will mark the first time in 10 years that a Japanese foreign minister attends the conference, which will be held at U.N. headquarters through May 22.

Although Japan has been calling for a reduction of nuclear weapons, it is dependent on the nuclear umbrella provided by the United States in terms of national security. Amid heightened tensions with North Korea and China, Tokyo is expecting to increase its reliance on a nuclear deterrent.

"Japan's proposal is a realistic suggestion that would not undermine Washington's nuclear deterrence," a Foreign Ministry official said.

Ahead of the gathering, the Japanese government submitted to the United Nations a proposed agreement compiled at a meeting of the Nonproliferation and Disarmament Initiative, a group of 12 non-nuclear nations, including Japan.

The document requires that countries with atomic weapons ensure transparency of their programs and begin multilateral talks for nuclear disarmament.

It will be the first time for Japan to participate in the NPT meeting as a member of a multilateral group.

Although Austria is seeking support for a statement demanding a ban of nuclear weapons, the Japanese government intends to remain noncommittal to maintain consistency with its security policy.

"It may appear to be a roundabout way, but our approach is actually more realistic and practical," Kishida has said of Japan's stance.

But many atomic bomb survivors, known as hibakusha, are dissatisfied with Tokyo's noncommittal attitude.

"Hibakusha hope the way will be paved toward nuclear abolition while they are still living," said Terumi Tanaka, the 82-year-old secretary-general of Nihon Hidankyo (the Japan Confederation of A- and H-bomb Sufferers Organizations). "Efforts by the Japanese government are insufficient."

The organization sent a delegation of 50 hibakusha and their supporters to the United States to coincide with the start of the U.N. conference.

(This article was written by Hajimu Takeda in Tokyo and Takashi Okuma and Shohei Okada in New York.)

New york rally



April 27, 2015

Thousands rally for abolition of nukes as hibakusha ranks thin

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2015/04/27/national/thousands-rally-abolition-nukes-hibakusha-ranks-thin/#.VT5P3ZPwmos>

Kyodo

NEW YORK – Atomic bomb survivors from Japan and peace campaigners from around the world marched through the streets of New York on Sunday to push for the abolition of nuclear weapons on the eve of a U.N. nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation conference.

Around 7,500 people carrying banners and signs chanted “No nukes!” and “No more Hiroshima!” and other slogans as they walked about 3 km toward the United Nations, where the conference to review the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty was to start Monday.

Although observers say it will not be easy for NPT members to produce a final document by consensus amid differences on the issues, aging atomic bomb survivors hope the discussions will bring nuclear weapons abolition within sight.

At a rally held ahead of the parade, Yuko Nakamura, who survived the atomic bombing of Hiroshima in August 1945, recalled that more than 200 students at her school died when the United States dropped the bomb. She was 13 years old at the time.

“The students were ready to die for their country (because it was wartime), but, deep down, they wanted to live. . . . I want you to know that an atomic bomb will destroy a city instantly and take away people’s lives with no mercy. It is not something that can be allowed from a humanitarian point of view,” she said. Hiroshima Mayor Kazumi Matsui also joined the rally. “Now is the time to transform your power into a concrete movement to create a world without nuclear weapons,” he told the participants.

Toward the end of the event, more than 7 million signatures on petitions from Japan and other countries seeking negotiations to eliminate the world’s nuclear arsenals were submitted to Taous Feroukhi, the Algerian ambassador who will chair the NPT review conference, and Angela Kane, top U.N. official for disarmament affairs. The conference will continue through May 22.

“We really must renew our commitment to carry the heavy torch of responsibility for achieving this goal — a world free of nuclear weapons,” Kane said, noting that the average age of the A-bomb survivors is close to 80.

Some participants said they were disappointed with the turnout and the drop in younger participants. Kim Bergier, a 64-year-old activist of the Michigan Stop the Nuclear Bombs Campaign, said she felt the overall number was “not big enough” compared with 2010, when the previous NPT review conference was held.

“I feel a stronger commitment for those who do show up . . . but there are also too many gray hairs, there are too many hibakusha that this will be the last time we’ll probably see them,” she said.

New York rally (2)

April 27, 2015

As NPT review kicks off, New York rally demands end to nuclear weapons



<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2015/04/27/world/npt-review-kicks-new-york-rally-demands-end-nuclear-weapons/#.VT30hZPwmos>

AP

NEW YORK – Global activists presented 8 million petitions to the U.N. disarmament chief on Sunday demanding a world free of nuclear weapons, kicking off a conference by world powers to review progress toward eventually achieving total disarmament.

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry and Iran's foreign minister are both expected to speak at the conference Monday amid intense interest in the fate of negotiations over Iran's nuclear program.

The Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, or NPT, Review Conference happens every five years, and experts have warned that little progress is expected this time, especially with relations cool between the two largest nuclear powers, Russia and the United States.

The more than a thousand demonstrators demanded that the world's nine nuclear-armed countries do far more toward cutting stockpiles.

Many protestors were from Japan, the only country ever hit by a nuclear attack. Fragile survivors of the U.S. attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki 70 years ago led the way in wheelchairs.

"I hope we don't have to have the NPT five years from now!" said 83-year-old Hiroshima survivor Setsuko Thurlow.

The U.N. disarmament chief, Angela Kane, stood by the wall of boxes of petitions and told the crowd that receiving the millions of names was "very humbling." She said she had signed one of the petitions herself when she was in Japan.

Kane said she spoke Friday with U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and told the crowd, "He's with you." As the march made its way uptown past the Manhattan brunch crowd, some bystanders showed little grasp of the number of nuclear weapons remaining around the world today.

Guesses ranged from 120 to 150,000 to “no idea whatsoever.” Experts estimate it’s more like 16,000. “Hundreds. Thousands. Doesn’t matter. They’re all bad,” said Hal Alterwein, 75. “All you need is one nut case to blow it up.”

The other nuclear-armed countries are Britain, France, China, India, Pakistan, Israel and North Korea. Only the United States, Russia, Britain, France and China have signed on to the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty.

Is this right?

April 27, 2015

Enola Gay co-pilot’s flight logs to go under hammer in New York

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2015/04/27/national/enola-gay-co-pilots-flight-logs-go-hammer-new-york/#.VT3z-pPwmos>

JJI

NEW YORK – The flight logs of Robert Lewis, co-pilot of the Enola Gay, the B-29 that dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima on Aug. 6, 1945, will be auctioned by Bonhams in New York on Wednesday.

In the logs, Lewis described the world’s first atomic bombing as a huge success and noted that the “war is over.”

At the auction house late last week, his youngest son, Steven, 57, said Lewis hoped the bomb released by the Enola Gay would be “enough to end” World War II.

Steven Lewis also quoted his father as saying that he “just couldn’t get over the power” of the device, code-named “Fat Man,” and that although it was unfortunate so many lives were lost in the attack, “that’s what happened in the war basically.”

The auction will be held ahead of the publication of Lewis’ notes on his wartime experience.

When the elder Lewis died in 1983, Steven Lewis took over many of his belongings, including the flight logs, a hand-drawn flight plan for the Hiroshima mission and an aerial photo of the mushroom cloud over the city.

“It has been a long time” since the bomb was dropped, Steven Lewis said: “That was a part of the past, something had to be done. It was a mission in a war.”

He added: “Japan became a totally different nation. Everything has changed.”

Will Japan realise the dream?

April 26, 2015

EDITORIAL: NPT conference should carve out path to freeing world of nuclear weapons

April 27, 2015

<http://ajw.asahi.com/article/views/editorial/AJ201504270013>

A quinquennial Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), where officials from about 190 countries will discuss nuclear disarmament and other related issues, is set to open April 27.

The conference is being held at a time when little headway is being made in freeing the world from nuclear arms and, on the contrary, the global situation concerning atomic weaponry is taking a turn for the worse.

This year marks the 70th anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. We hope the conference will set a path forward for dispelling dark clouds.

The previous review conference, held in 2010, adopted a final document that contained a 64-item action plan, including concrete steps for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. But little progress has been achieved during the past five years to materialize the contents of that document.

Consider the strategic nuclear arms of the United States and Russia, the world's two major nuclear powers. A treaty to reduce those arms by 30 percent took effect in 2011, but souring bilateral relations have stalled their subsequent talks.

Russia went so far as to hint at possible use of its nuclear weapons, adding to a sense of uncertainty surrounding the matter.

Iran has reached a framework agreement with the United States and some other countries over the longstanding issue of its nuclear development program. On the other hand, an international meeting toward the denuclearization of the Middle East, whose staging was promised in the previous review conference, is not even expected to take place anytime soon because countries concerned have yet to reach an agreement.

India and Pakistan, two countries that are not signatories to the NPT, are strongly suspected to be increasing their nuclear arms. North Korea, which has declared its withdrawal from the NPT, is also continuing to implement nuclear testing.

How should we put the brakes on this trend?

We place our hopes on an ongoing move to have nuclear arms banned under international laws as a gateway to a possible breakthrough. This idea has rapidly been gaining currency with non-nuclear powers after the final document of the previous review conference explicitly mentioned the "inhumanity of nuclear weapons."

The United States and Britain participated in an international conference held in Vienna late last year under the theme of inhumanity. But the world's nuclear powers, which see their atomic arsenals as key to their security, are set firmly on opposing a ban on nuclear arms.

Austria, which hosted the conference, released a document calling for identifying and pursuing "effective measures," ahead of the review conference, toward the goal of banning nuclear weapons.

If step-by-step nuclear disarmament, being advocated by nuclear powers, has yet to make any progress, it would be natural to seek an alternative, more effective approach. We hope the nations will seek common ground instead of turning their backs on discussions.

It is lamentable that Japan, which relies on the "nuclear umbrella" of the United States, is taking a negative stance toward outlawing nuclear weapons.

Japan, which holds a special position as a country that has suffered atomic bombings, has been considered as a potential go-between to bridge nuclear and non-nuclear powers.

If things remain as they are, however, Japan could obstruct a trend for the abolition of nuclear weapons instead of fulfilling the role it is expected to play.

More than 30 atomic bomb survivors are visiting the United States to coincide with the review conference.

Masakazu Saito, who, at 90, is the oldest among them, says, "I will call for eliminating nuclear arms as long as I am alive."

We hope that countries, particularly Japan, will act positively to realize the dream.

--The Asahi Shimbun, April 26

What is Japan's real position on nuclear disarmament?

April 27, 2015

As NPT review conference begins, Japan hopes to win international acceptance

<http://mainichi.jp/english/english/newsselect/news/20150427p2a00m0na003000c.html>

As the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) begins, Japan is promoting "realistic and practical nuclear disarmament measures." It hopes to win acceptance from international society by acting as a catalyst in drawing nuclear powers and countries without nuclear weapons together.

Although Japan currently relies on the United States for nuclear deterrence, it aims to achieve the abolition of nuclear weapons. It is one of 12 non-nuclear states that formed the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI), and it seeks to have an NPDI draft agreement reflected in the final documents of the 2015 NPT Review Conference.

The draft agreement calls for the launch of nuclear disarmament negotiations between various countries - not just the United States and Russia -- as well as greater transparency with respect to the possession of nuclear weapons.

While NPDI members differ on some points, such as the need for a nuclear ban treaty, the agreement serves as the "greatest common divisor" between them.

This year Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida will attend the NPT review conference at the U.N. headquarters in New York. The last time a Japanese foreign minister attended an NPT review conference was in 2005. Kishida is a House of Representatives member from Hiroshima, and he has a strong attachment to efforts to eliminate nuclear weapons. As chairman of an NPDI meeting of foreign ministers in Hiroshima in April last year, he compiled the "Hiroshima Declaration" that underscored the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of using nuclear weapons.

At this year's NPT review conference, which takes place 70 years after the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Kishida, representing the only country to have been hit by atomic bombs in warfare, will stress the inhumane nature of nuclear weapons, and call for leaders to visit the A-bombed cities. He is also due to take part in the local Hiroshima-Nagasaki Appeal.

Nevertheless, Japan remains in a difficult position. At a meeting of the United Nations General Assembly in October 2013, the government for the first time signed a New Zealand-led declaration against nuclear weapons which stressed the inhumane nature of nuclear weapons and said that they should never be used again. At the same time, the Japanese government endorsed a statement by Australia which said that simply banning nuclear weapons provided no guarantee that they would be eliminated -- taking security into consideration. This divided support prompted opposition parties in Japan to criticize the government

for its "inconsistent" stance. This time it does not plan to side with calls from Australia and other countries for the start of negotiations on a nuclear ban treaty.

The government aims to gain leverage from the NPT agreement and make concrete progress in the three fields of nuclear disarmament, nonproliferation, and the peaceful use of nuclear energy so that international society will not have any doubts about Japan's level of commitment. But there are no optimistic views within the government. One Foreign Ministry official commented, "It will probably be difficult for opinions to converge at this conference."

Austria's ban on nuclear weapons backed by 159 countries

April 30, 2015

Austria, backed by 159 nations, calls for ban on nuclear weapons

http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/politics/AJ201504300016

REUTERS

UNITED NATIONS--Austria on April 28 called for banning nuclear weapons because of their catastrophic humanitarian effects, an initiative it said now has the backing of 159 countries.

Austrian Foreign Minister Sebastian Kurz was speaking at the five-year review conference of the 1970 nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

"The only way to guarantee that nuclear weapons will never be used again is through their total elimination," Kurz told the 191 parties to the treaty, the world's benchmark arms control accord. "All states share the responsibility to prevent the use of nuclear weapons."

Diplomats from the 159 countries supporting the ban, presented ahead of the 70th anniversary of the U.S. atom bombs dropped on Japan, said the initiative was modeled on successful campaigns to ban land mines and other weapons and could take years to move forward. Japan supported the initiative.

The initiative has virtually no support among NPT nuclear weapons states and veto-wielding Security Council members--the United States, Britain, France, Russia and China--or the countries of NATO, an alliance that provides a kind of "nuclear umbrella" security guarantee for its members.

But most of the 193 U.N. members back it.

The five permanent Security Council members signed the NPT as nuclear weapons states, although the pact calls on them to negotiate the reduction and eventual elimination of their arms caches. Non-nuclear states complain that there have been too few steps toward nuclear disarmament.

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif on April 27 demanded countries possessing nuclear weapons scrap any plans to modernize their arsenals.

Four other states presumed to have nuclear weapons--Israel, Pakistan, India and North Korea--are not listed as supporters of the initiative.

Iran, accused by Western powers of developing a nuclear weapons capability under cover of a civilian program, says its program is peaceful. It is in talks with six world powers to curb sensitive nuclear work in exchange for sanctions relief. Tehran supports the Austrian initiative.

Without any explanation, Zarif, who on April 27 spoke on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, canceled a planned speech in his national capacity on April 28 morning as news broke of Iran's seizure of a cargo ship in the Gulf.

"Zarif decided that he did not have much to add to the NAM statement he gave on April 27. Hence it was decided not to give a national statement," a diplomat at the conference told Reuters on condition of anonymity.

Mayors for Peace

May 1, 2015

Mayors for Peace renew commitment to abolish nuclear weapons

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2015/05/01/national/mayors-peace-renew-commitment-abolish-nuclear-weapons/#.VUMrxpPwmos>

Kyodo

NEW YORK – Thousands of cities worldwide united in the pursuit of a nuclear-free world renewed their commitment to work toward the abolition of nuclear weapons during a gathering Wednesday at the United Nations, where a nuclear disarmament conference is underway.

At the outset of the gathering of Mayors for Peace, Hiroshima Mayor Kazumi Matsui, who serves as president of the organization, expressed hope that the assembly will act “as a driving force for the worldwide momentum toward nuclear weapons abolition.”

Nagasaki Mayor Tomihisa Taue, vice president of the organization, expressed “great dismay” at not seeing any progress on banning nuclear weapons and urged country leaders to take action now that global attention has grown recently over the inhumane nature of nuclear weapons.

Municipalities of other countries also joined the calls to rid the world of nuclear weapons, with a representative from Fongo-Tongo in Cameroon issuing a reminder that there is “only one living planet” and people have nowhere to go if the Earth is destroyed by nuclear weapons.

In a document adopted during the gathering in New York, the Mayors for Peace said: “We issue today . . . this appeal for a renewed global commitment to achieve the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

“We make this appeal on the basis of our shared mission to protect the lives and property of our fellow citizens against any future use of nuclear weapons, the most inhumane and indiscriminate of all weapons of mass destruction.”

The assembly was held as the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty review conference started Monday.

Mayors for Peace counts 6,649 cities in 160 countries among its membership. The Hiroshima-based nongovernmental organization was formed in 1982, when the mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki — the two cities devastated by the U.S. atomic bombings in 1945 — appealing for other cities worldwide to join the cause.

Will hibakushas' lesson be lost?



Hiroshima survivor Setsuko Thurlow (right) participates in a march against nuclear weapons on Sunday in New York. At 83, she is part of a generation of nuclear attack survivors that is quickly disappearing. | AP

May 1, 2015

Dwindling ranks of hibakusha fear lesson from their suffering isn't being learned

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2015/05/01/national/dwindling-ranks-hibakusha-fear-lesson-suffering-isnt-learned/#.VUMrRpPwmos>

by Cara Anna
AP

UNITED NATIONS – What a nuclear attack didn't take from them, old age will. Seventy years have passed since the United States shocked the world by dropping atomic bombs on the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. As nuclear powers gather this week to discuss a landmark disarmament

treaty, the now-fragile survivors warn this may be their last chance to use their personal horror to hurry that work along.

The Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, or NPT, review conference happens just every five years. The average hibakusha is about 80 years old.

There are signs they are fading. Sunday's thousand-strong rally in Manhattan against nuclear weapons was led by a trio of women in wheelchairs, slowly making their way along the mile-and-a-half route. One of the most famous survivors, 86-year-old Sumitero Taniguchi, could not join them. Frail and silent, he sat in a wheelchair and watched the march set off up the avenue. Japanese media surrounded the Nagasaki survivor with cameras, leaning in for a better view.

"I was shocked when I saw him," said 83-year-old Hiroshima survivor Setsuko Thurlow, who completed the march in a wheelchair. "He was so much thinner."

Thurlow was 13 when Hiroshima was bombed, resulting in a death toll outright and over the coming months of 140,000 people.

"People at a distance saw the mushroom cloud and heard a thunderous roar. But I did not see the cloud because I was in it," she says when she tells her story. She climbed from flaming ruins and spent hours giving water to a field full of people dying.

She has spoken about her experience, she said, thousands of times around the world. "My health? I've been blessed," she said after Sunday's march. But friends say she lives with pain every day.

Japan is famous for having the world's oldest population, but supporters of the hibakusha warn that the health effects of a nuclear attack likely will shorten their lives.

Taniguchi was 16 years old and riding his bicycle about a mile away from the hypocenter when Nagasaki was bombed. Seventy thousand people were killed, outright and over the ensuing months. His back was so badly burned that he spent much of the next 3½ years lying on his stomach. His friends say he still has open wounds and cannot sweat.

"Nuclear arms are weapons of the devil, which will not allow humans to live nor die as humans," he told an audience at a disarmament gathering in New York over the weekend.

Later, waiting for an elevator to go up one floor, a chain of origami peace cranes around his neck, Taniguchi declined an interview request. Too tired, his friend, Hiroko Kumagai, explained. "I am very worried about his health condition," she said quietly.

"It's a miracle he's alive. And he's a super heavy smoker," said Kathleen Sullivan. The program director for a project called Hibakusha Stories said this year will be the last to bring survivors to speak at New York City schools, "because frankly, it's concerning bringing so many elderly people together."

Sullivan teared up for a moment over the recent death of a good friend, a survivor who was in his late 80s. She worries about how to carry stories forward as a unique generation passes away.

In the past few years, trainings have begun in Hiroshima and Nagasaki so that people can share the experiences of specific survivors, she said. But the personal impact will be missing.

The U.N. secretary-general, Ban Ki-moon, has made a special point to thank the hibakusha. "I defy anyone to look into the eyes of these courageous and resilient individuals and say you know better what nuclear weapons bring," he said in a statement as the nuclear conference opened.

About three dozen hibakusha came to New York for the nuclear conference, but it's the last time a significant number will be able to make the trip, said Joseph Gerson, disarmament coordinator for the American Friends Service Committee.

Pain and shame around radiation exposure at Hiroshima and Nagasaki lifted slowly in Japan, inhibiting public discussion. Hibiki Ouchi's grandfather was a Hiroshima survivor who later died of skin cancer, but

no one told her his story until a few years ago, when her mother got breast cancer and worried that it was because of the bomb.

By then, Ouichi was already working with the Japan Council Against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs.

"I never met my grandfather, but maybe he made me do this," she said. "Whenever I hear a hibakusha testimony, I feel they are him."

Hopes now rest on the youngest survivors, like Toshiki Fujimori, 71. "We younger hibakusha are trying to inherit the experience," he said.

But he remembers nothing of his own. When Hiroshima was attacked, he was 1 year old.

Scrap 'hair-trigger' alert systems!

Russian 'hair-trigger' nuclear alert urged ended, especially in age of cyberattack

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2015/05/01/world/u-s-russian-hair-trigger-nuclear-alert-urged-ended-especially-age-cyberattack/#.VUMq-5Pwmos>

AFP-JIJI

WASHINGTON – Former U.S. and Russian commanders Thursday called for scrapping "hair-trigger" alerts on nuclear weapons that carry grave risks of a potential atomic disaster — especially in an age of cyberattacks.

Retired military officers from the United States, Russia and other nuclear powers issued a report warning of the mounting dangers of the short fuses that allow hundreds of atomic weapons to be launched within minutes.

The high alert status is a legacy of outdated Cold War doctrine, when U.S. and Soviet leaders feared a devastating first strike that could "decapitate" an entire nuclear force, according to the report sponsored by the disarmament group Global Zero.

"Hundreds of missiles carrying nearly 1,800 warheads are ready to fly at a moment's notice," said the report. "These legacy postures of the Cold War are anachronisms but they remain fully operational."

The hair-trigger alert, which applies to half of the U.S. and Russian arsenals, is particularly dangerous in an era when "warning and decision timelines are getting shorter, and consequently the potential for fateful human error in nuclear control systems is growing larger."

The growing threat of cyberassault also exacerbates the risks of the alert status, opening the way for false alarms or even a hijacking of the control systems for the weapons, it said.

"Vulnerability to cyber attack . . . is a new wild card in the deck," it said.

The report calls for the United States and Russia to renounce the prompt-alert arrangements and to require 24 to 72 hours before a nuclear weapon could be launched. And it also urges forging a binding agreement among all countries to refrain from putting their nuclear forces on high alert.

"There are a set of vulnerabilities particularly for the U.S. and Russia in these systems that were built in the fifties, sixties, seventies and eighties," said James Cartwright, the retired four-star general who once was in charge of the U.S. nuclear arsenal.

"Many of these old systems are subject to false alarms," Cartwright said at a news conference.

The report said other nuclear powers, including China, India, Pakistan, Israel, France and Britain, had less risky systems for their nuclear weapons compared to the United States and Russia.

"Their architectures have provided for lower alert rates and afforded decision-makers more time to consider their nuclear options," it said. "The United States and Russia could learn from these models."

"An absolute evil"

May 2, 2015

Hiroshima, Nagasaki mayors step up calls for elimination of nuclear weapons

http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/politics/AJ201505020038

THE ASAHI SHIMBUN

NEW YORK--The mayor of Nagasaki made a strident call here for the creation of more nuclear-free zones that could constitute a "non-nuclear umbrella" of sorts.

Tomihisa Taue made the proposal at a conference to review the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty here on May 1. He was joined by Hiroshima Mayor Kazumi Matsui, who also spoke out against the inhumanity of nuclear weapons.

Speeches by the two men came as their cities this August prepare to observe the 70th anniversary of the atomic bombings that left more than 200,000 people dead.

Matsui said nuclear weapons "are an absolute evil that is the ultimate in inhumane weapons."

He also called for the start of negotiations as quickly as possible for the signing of a treaty to eliminate nuclear weapons.

"There are some who argue that mutual distrust between nations and the existence of terrorists are barriers preventing nuclear disarmament, but I cannot concur," Matsui said. "Now is the time for policymakers to exercise leadership to begin work in creating an international environment that would make possible the elimination of nuclear weapons."

Taue pointed to a conclusion reached at the 2010 NPT review conference which said the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only "absolute guarantee" against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

He said the failure to reach that objective raised concerns that "the NPT structure was becoming a mere facade."

Taue called on the leaders of nuclear powers to promote a reduction of their nuclear arsenals. He also urged them to visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Taue called on nations now under a nuclear umbrella to make efforts to establish and expand nuclear-free areas that do not depend on nuclear weapons.

(This article was written by Takashi Okuma and Shohei Okada.)

Hibakusha choir in New York

May 4, 2015

Choir of A-bomb survivors gets standing ovation at concert in New York

http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/social_affairs/AJ201505040061



Kazumichi Terai, who heads the choir group Himawari, performs at a concert in New York on May 2. (Provided by Paule Saviano)

By SHOHEI OKADA/ Staff Writer

NEW YORK--A choir comprised of Nagasaki's hibakusha atomic bomb survivors had the audience on its feet and joining in at a concert here May 2 to promote nuclear disarmament.

Titled "With Love to Hiroshima and Nagasaki," the concert was held at the New York Society for Ethical Culture in Manhattan. It was hosted by Clifton Truman Daniel, the grandson of President Harry S. Truman, who authorized the 1945 bombings.

The event coincided with a United Nations conference here that is reviewing the Treaty on Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

The group is made up of about 50 survivors, whose ages range from around 69 to their late 80s, and calls itself Himawari (sunflower).

Some of the members were fetuses at the time of the bombings. The choir marked its 10th anniversary last November. Until the trip to the United States, the group had never performed abroad.

The group is headed by Kazumichi Terai, who composed a song to support a string of lawsuits by the hibakusha against the government. The plaintiffs sought official recognition as survivors of the atomic bombings. Initially, the group started off with 10 or so members, but gradually grew in size.

Himawari, which gave the last performance of the night, opened with the songs "Mo Nidoto" (Never again) and "Urakami." They were sung in the hope that no one will ever fall victim to nuclear warfare again.

At one point, a violinist performed on an instrument that survived one of the bombings. The survivors also shared personal stories with the audience.

"I came feeling frail," said Aiko Tanaka, 79. "But I transform when I perform. When I sing, the feelings I had when the atomic bomb hit come back to me."

Tanaka was playing in her elementary school in Nagasaki, 3.5 kilometers from ground zero, when the bomb detonated. Memories of people burned in the blast "come flooding back" when she performs. The third song was written exclusively for the concert and sung together with local high school students. "We Never Forget," with its English lyrics, was the show-closer and sung with the help of the audience. "I'm so glad to be alive," said 69-year-old Yachiyo Ohira. "I'm so happy that I was able to sing here." Ohira had only just been conceived when the attack occurred. She later lost her own son to cancer, which she has suffered from herself. Although Ohira did not directly experience the horrors of the bombing, she sings with the group to promote peace through music.

Ohira was nervous before the tour as she had never traveled abroad. But once she arrived in the United States, she realized "there are many people who feel the same way as I do."

"I thought, I should do my best with all my heart and keep doing what I can," she said.

The group sings each August at the peace memorial ceremony held in Nagasaki. It is scheduled to perform in Munich in the fall.

NTP changes: Watering down of original text?

Nuclear weapons

May 13, 2015

Draft nuke disarmament paper drops call for leaders to visit Hiroshima

<http://mainichi.jp/english/english/newsselect/news/20150513p2g00m0dm067000c.html>

NEW YORK (Kyodo) -- A draft outcome document for the ongoing U.N. conference on nuclear disarmament has **removed a reference for global leaders to visit Japan's atomic-bombed cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki** in its latest revision circulated among member countries Tuesday.

Three major committees of the month-long review conference of the parties to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty have been working on compiling elements to be folded into what they hope will become the final outcome document during the intensive negotiations process.

One of the committees produced a first draft last week and noted the proposal that leaders visit the Japanese cities on the 70th anniversary of the U.S atomic bombings and listen to the voices of survivors. The new document without the references to the visits came after Chinese Ambassador for Disarmament Affairs Fu Cong said Monday he had requested that mention of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki visits be dropped.

"We don't want the humanitarian issue (regarding nuclear weapons) to be taken advantage of by (a) certain government with ulterior motives in trying to distort the history and trying to impose a partial interpretation of the Second World War on the conference, so we want the deletion," Fu told Kyodo News on Monday. He was speaking in English.

"The purpose is that they (Japanese government) are trying to portray Japan as a victim of the Second World War, rather than a victimizer," he told reporters on Tuesday, noting how the Japanese military committed atrocities in his country, as well as in Korea and South East Asia.

On the April 27 opening day of the review conference on the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, Japan's Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida delivered a speech inviting political leaders from across the globe to travel to the two cities and "witness with their own eyes the realities of atomic bombings."

The Chinese envoy said he asked the reference to Hiroshima and Nagasaki be deleted during a closed-door meeting of the review conference on Monday.

"We don't want any mention of Hiroshima (or) Nagasaki because there are reasons why those two (cities) were bombed," Fu said on Monday.

"We have nothing against the Japanese people, least of all with the survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki nuclear bombing," he later told reporters.

He, however, contrasted the Japanese government's attitude of having "denied" testimonies of "comfort women," or women, mostly from Asia, who were forced to work at Japanese military brothers during World War II, to what he sees as an attempt to highlight what atomic bomb survivors have to say.

Wartime history remains a sensitive issue for Japan and China, even though there have been recent signs of a thaw in their relations. China suffered from Japan's wartime actions.

With this development, the history issue has spilled over into multilateral discussions at the United Nations during negotiations on nuclear disarmament.

Fu said that "there are too many historical baggages to the two cities so we hope that this conference should keep clear of the history."

Diplomatic sources also said South Korea opposed including the language referring to the visits.

Fu explained that at least a dozen countries, both publicly and privately, had expressed their support for Beijing's push to remove the language.

A Japanese government source said Japan "will make maximum efforts" at reinstating the deleted portion. "There is a possibility of the reference to be restored as negotiations are in the initial stage but Japan may be forced to make some concessions in other areas (in return)," another source said.

A final outcome document of the NPT review conference is expected to be produced under the leadership of Chairwoman Taous Feroukhi after the draft text is negotiated by the three committees -- on nuclear disarmament, nuclear nonproliferation and the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

A final document cannot always be produced, as was the case most recently in 2005 when consensus could not be reached.

The review conference has been held once every five years since the nonproliferation treaty took effect in 1970. The current meeting is scheduled to run through May 22.

Significant gaps in views remain over how to move nonproliferation forward among the roughly 190 signatory states.

At Monday's closed-door session, nuclear states also expressed their opposition to a call for a potential legal framework such as a convention to ban nuclear weapons in the earlier draft circulated last week, diplomatic sources said.

The latest revision of the text, however, retains the call for such framework.

But a European diplomat described how **the latest changes reflect a watering down of the original text.**

The five nuclear powers recognized under the NPT -- Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States - - favor a step-by-step approach to disarmament over instituting a ban on nuclear weapons.

May 13, 2015

Japan, China argue over draft NPT document

<http://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/english/news/nuclear.html>

May 13, 2015 - Updated 05:31 UTC+2

Japan and China are wrangling over whether to include an appeal for world leaders to visit the atomic-bombed cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in the final document of a conference to review the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Negotiations over an agreement document to be adopted at the NPT Review Conference at UN headquarters in New York are now in full swing, with the end of the meeting set for May 22nd.

At the start of the meeting last month, Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida proposed a gesture to mark the 70th anniversary of the end of World War Two this year. He suggested that an appeal calling on world leaders to visit the 2 cities and learn the inhumanity of nuclear weapons should be included in the document.

A draft agreement released last week contained the phrase. But the draft revised by Tuesday does not carry the wording.

It was learned that China had worked on the conference chair to delete the phrase from the draft. The Chinese delegation appears to have maintained that Japan is making use of an opportunity to act as a war victim.

Chinese Ambassador for Disarmament Affairs Fu Cong told reporters that his country has no hostility to the Japanese people or atomic bomb survivors. He said, however, that China cannot tolerate the Japanese government's efforts to hide the tragedy Japan inflicted on countries during its war of aggression.

The Japanese delegation believes that negotiations over the draft agreement are ongoing. It issued a statement saying it will continue working to have its proposed appeal contained in the document.

Visit A-bombed cities and realise...

May 14, 2015

Hiroshima, Nagasaki angered at wording on NPT draft

http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/social_affairs/AJ201505140055

THE ASAHI SHIMBUN

The mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki objected to the removal of a call by Japan for world leaders to visit their A-bombed cities in a draft of a nuclear disarmament treaty review.

"To be exposed to the reality of the destruction and deeply understand the inhumanity of the action is the first step for the debate with regard to nuclear weapons," Nagasaki Mayor Tomihisa Taue said in a statement issued May 13. "A proposal to visit the A-bombed cities is appropriate."

Representatives of countries participating in the ninth conference to review the U.N. Treaty on the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) are meeting at U.N. headquarters in New York through May 22.

The first draft of the review, dated May 8, encouraged world leaders and young people from around the globe to visit the cities and witness firsthand the reality of the August 1945 atomic bombings.

The proposal was initially made by Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida, who is from Hiroshima, during a speech at the U.N. conference on April 27.

But Japan's proposal was deleted from the second draft issued on May 12 after China asked that it be removed.

China admitted to having requested that the proposal be deleted.

At least 12 countries, including South Korea, expressed support for China's request.

Fu Cong, Chinese ambassador for disarmament affairs, told reporters May 12 that he does not accept the fact that the Japanese government is trying to portray Japan as a victim of World War II, rather than as an aggressor nation.

Commenting on the matter at a news conference a day later, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying said: "The review conference of the parties to the NPT is now in a crucial stage. We hope parties concerned ... avoid introducing complicated and sensitive factors."

With regard to China's assertion that Japan is trying to portray itself as a victim of the war, Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga said on May 13: "(The proposal) has nothing to do with historical issues. We cannot possibly understand (China's) action."

Taue, the mayor of Nagasaki, delivered a speech on May 1 at the conference encouraging heads of nuclear states to "come to Hiroshima and Nagasaki" and "see the truth of exposure to nuclear weapons with your own eyes."

Taue also sent a request through the U.S. Embassy in Japan to President Barack Obama to visit the two cities.

"I hope this argument will proceed without making Hiroshima's wish a political issue," Hiroshima Mayor Kazumi Matsui said at a May 13 news conference.

Matsui also criticized China for its objection to the proposal.

"It was a reaction that completely ignores the feelings of hibakusha (atomic bomb survivors)," he said.

Visit A-bombed cities (2)

May 16, 2015

Japan requests Hiroshima invite to be reinstated in disarmament paper

<http://mainichi.jp/english/english/newsselect/news/20150516p2g00m0in005000c.html>

NEW YORK (Kyodo) -- Japan called on Friday for the return of language referring to possible visits by leaders to Hiroshima and Nagasaki in the outcome document of the U.N. review conference on the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty after it was removed from a draft paper at China's insistence.

At a meeting of the committee on disarmament, one of the three panels at the conference, around 10 countries including the Philippines, Australia, Chile, Czech Republic and Nigeria expressed support for the Japanese proposal.

Toshio Sano, a Geneva-based ambassador for disarmament, said at the meeting that the invitation is "one of the most effective ways" to increase awareness about the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons and is supported by other delegations.

"Therefore, Japan requests that this will reappear in the next draft" of the conference's outcome document, he added.

The proposal for leaders to "witness with their own eyes the realities" of the 1945 bombings by the United States was made by Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida in his speech on April 27, the opening day of the review conference of the around 190 member countries of the treaty.

The language had been included in elements for a draft but was later dropped after China strongly opposed the idea.

On Friday, Chinese Ambassador for Disarmament Affairs Fu Cong said that Japan has repeatedly denied its history of invasion of other countries and the atrocities committed by its forces in those countries during the war.

"I hope that the Japanese delegation can show some sensitivity to the emotions of other countries and do not insist on their proposals," he said.

Having spoken against the Japanese proposal repeatedly in the past few days, Fu added, "I would say enough is enough."

Backing Japan's bid, a representative of the Philippines delegation said that "the Philippines strongly believe nothing can substitute the experience of seeing first hand devastation, human suffering there." The invitation proposal "is not about World War II" but "about informing the world through Hiroshima and Nagasaki the extent to which nukes could wreak havoc," the speaker said.

At a press conference in Tokyo on Friday, Kishida said he is sending Shinsuke Sugiyama, one of his deputies, to the NPT review conference to drum up support from other countries for its bid to invite leaders to visit the two cities. Motohide Yoshikawa, Japan's top envoy at the United Nations, is also expected to be enlisted for this effort.

Participants in the review conference are planning to merge final drafts from the three committees -- on disarmament, nonproliferation and the peaceful use of atomic energy -- into one early next week in the run-up to the conclusion of the month-long event on May 22.

In the disarmament committee, negotiators face challenges in finalizing a draft as the call by non-nuclear weapons states for outlawing nuclear weapons based on humanitarian concerns has met stiff opposition from nuclear powers, who favor a step-by-step approach to disarmament.

May 16, 2015(Mainichi Japan)

See also :

Japan snubs China, urges Hiroshima, Nagasaki invitations to be reinstated in NPT paper

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2015/05/16/national/japan-snubs-china-urges-hiroshima-nagasaki-invitations-reinstated-npt-paper/#.VVdDmpPwmic>

Kyodo

NEW YORK – Japan on Friday called for the return of language referring to possible visits by leaders to Hiroshima and Nagasaki in the outcome document of the U.N. review conference on the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty after it was removed from a draft paper at China's insistence.

[...]

Collateral effects of bilateral disputes

May 21, 2015

Bilateral dispute with China derails Japanese proposal in NPT review

http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/politics/AJ201505210061

THE ASAHI SHIMBUN

NEW YORK--A proposal for world leaders to visit the A-bombed cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki was dropped from the draft of a statement about a United Nations nuclear nonproliferation treaty under review because of the spat between Japan and China over interpretations of history.

Hiroshima Mayor Kazumi Matsui and his counterpart in Nagasaki, Tomihisa Taue, strongly supported the call made by Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida so leaders can better understand the effects of the 1945 atomic bombings of the two Japanese cities.

The proposal had been included in a draft dated May 8 at the ninth conference to review the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) treaty, but was deleted from a draft issued four days later after China requested it be removed, claiming that Japan was attempting to portray itself as a victim of World War II, rather than as the victimizer.

The normal procedure in reaching agreement on a final document for the NPT review conference is to confer about rewording phrases so the document is acceptable to all.

The proposal was apparently removed because the coordinating nations were seeking unanimous consent and decided to leave out any wording that could lead to opposition, in this case, the dispute between Japan and China.

Japan sent Deputy Foreign Minister Shinsuke Sugiyama to U.N. headquarters in New York to deliver a speech on May 18 urging the participating nations to reinsert the proposal. However, because negotiations were already bogged down in other parts of the final document, Algeria, the chair of the NPT review conference, and other nations decided to separate the discussion of the Japanese proposal from the informal negotiations in order to reach a final agreement.

About the only way the proposal could be returned to the draft is through bilateral discussions between Japan and China that lead to a compromise.

Because that compromise would also have to be approved by other participating nations, time constraints on the current review conference mean the proposal to visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki will likely not make it into the final statement.

The ninth NPT review conference is scheduled to conclude on May 22.

(This article was written by Ichiro Matsuo and Ryuichi Kanari.)

A setback for Japan?

May 22, 2015

Japan fails to get A-bomb invite reinserted into NPT review draft

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2015/05/22/national/politics-diplomacy/japan-fails-bid-restore-hiroshima-nagasaki-invite-disarmament-paper/#.VV84H0bwmic>

Kyodo

NEW YORK – Japan’s attempt to reinsert a U.N. call for world leaders to visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki into the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty has fizzled, dealing a blow to Tokyo, which dispatched a top diplomat to New York to press the matter after Beijing got it removed from the draft.

The two cities were destroyed by atomic bombs during World War II.

With the NPT review conference wrapping up on Friday, the Japanese delegation made another try by informally proposing that the final document include an invitation to “the atomic bombed areas,” without naming either city, a diplomat said.

When that failed, it attempted to replace “the atomic bombed areas” with a phrase saying the NPT conference encourages “interactions with and directly sharing the experiences of the people and the communities affected by nuclear weapons” as a way to raise public awareness about nuclear disarmament, another diplomat said.

While this phrase may well be taken as a vague reference to Hiroshima and Nagasaki, it represents a setback for Japan.

Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida made the proposal calling on political leaders and youths to visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki, on the first day of the conference on April 27.

This year being the 70th anniversary of the atomic bombings of the two cities by the United States, Kishida invited them to “witness with their own eyes the reality of atomic bombings.”

The invite had been included in an early draft but was dropped after China, one of Japan’s war victims, insisted it was an attempt by Japan to portray itself as a victim of war.

Tokyo then sent **Deputy Foreign Minister Shinsuke Sugiyama**, an unusually high-ranking official for such a conference, to bolster the Japanese delegation’s attempts to gain support from the member states and conduct negotiations with the Chinese side. But the bid faltered, apparently in the face of opposition from Beijing.

Japan’s proposal drew support from at least 26 countries at the NPT conference. The treaty has around 190 member states.

With China in opposition, none of the remaining four nuclear powers, including Japan’s ally the United States, openly endorsed Japan’s idea. A diplomatic source said it shows how united the nuclear states are.

By remaining allied in their opposition to rapid nuclear disarmament, the five countries likely avoided creating the impression they were marching to the beats of different drummers.

As the conference enters its final phase, challenges also remain to push negotiations forward on other fronts, making it difficult to predict whether the conference can eventually adopt a final document.

Some nonnuclear states could raise voices of revolt because **a reference to a convention to outlaw nuclear weapons has been removed from the draft**, which was proposed as a means of advancing nuclear disarmament.

The idea for instituting such a convention is backed by some nonnuclear states, while the five nuclear powers, which include Russia, Britain and France, have been calling for an incremental approach to nuclear disarmament.

Other sticking points include language about the humanitarian aspect of the consequences of nuclear weapons and a call on nuclear states to report the number and types of nuclear warheads in their stockpiles every year.

Negotiators also conducted last-minute consultations on setting up a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons that would cover Israel, an acknowledged nuclear state that has not joined the NPT.

Diplomats from relevant countries, including China and Japan, meanwhile, discussed how the conference addresses North Korea's nuclear weapons program.

Disappointing

May 23, 2015

UN disarmament talks collapse

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2015/05/23/world/u-n-disarmament-talks-collapse/#.VWGEMebwmic>

Kyodo

NEW YORK – A four-week U.N. review conference on the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty ended Friday without adopting a consensus document after negotiators failed to narrow differences over a proposal to make the Middle East a nuclear weapons-free zone.

The failure to produce an outline for actions for the next five years at the meeting, which took place in the 70th anniversary year of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, raised concerns that efforts to advance toward a world free of nuclear arms will lose momentum.

The conference president, Algerian diplomat Taous Feroukhi, admitted to a lack of consensus at a plenary meeting that was held after hours of delay. Citing “diverging expectations of state parties for a progressive outcome,” she said “it would be impossible for any single consensual document to possibly meet the highest aspirations of all parties.”

With the current meeting — held once every five years — not the first to close without adopting a final document, the conference's effectiveness in promoting its agenda of disarmament, nonproliferation and the peaceful use of nuclear energy may be thrown into question.

At the plenary meeting, the proposal for a Middle East zone that would involve Israel — an undeclared but acknowledged nuclear power — was raised by a number of speakers.

Rose Gotemoeller, the U.S. undersecretary for arms control and security policy, rejected a plan to hold a conference on establishing such a zone by March 1 next year that had been contained in the final draft for an outcome document, with the idea having been put forward by the Russians.

She called it “an arbitrary deadline” and blasted Egypt and other states, saying they were not willing to let go of this and other “unrealistic and unworkable conditions” in the text.

Britain and Canada also criticized the conference deadline language in the final text.

Egyptian Ambassador Hisham Badr slammed the United States, saying it had “blocked” an agreement on the nuclear-free zone. It is “a sad day” for the NPT, he said, pointing out how three countries had blocked the agreement. “By blocking consensus, we are depriving the world — but especially the Middle East — of even one chance of a better future,” he added.

Mikhail Ulyanov, the Russian head of delegation, said it was a “shame that such an opportunity for dialogue had turned out to be missed, perhaps for a long time to come.”

In the closing days of the conference, some observers said nuclear “haves” and “have-nots” in the NPT framework were narrowing some differences over nuclear disarmament in working out a final document. But consensus was blocked over the issue of Israel, which is not party to the treaty but attended the review meeting as an observer for the first time in 20 years.

Along with many other participants at the plenary meeting, Japanese Deputy Foreign Minister Shinsuke Sugiyama expressed disappointment about the lack of a final document, saying it is “extremely regrettable that this conference was not able to adopt a consensus, a substantive document, though we seemed to have come quite near to do so.”

Japan attempted to include an invitation for world leaders to visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki in the document, but it was dropped in the face of opposition from China, which said Tokyo was trying to portray itself as a war victim.

Despite the failure to come up with an agreed-on document Sugiyama stressed that this did not change his country’s commitment to the credibility of the NPT regime. “It is not all lost,” he said, adding that Japan will host a series of meetings on disarmament issues in August in Hiroshima.

Beatrice Fihn, the executive director of ICAN, a nongovernmental organization, said the removal of references to Hiroshima and Nagasaki visits was regrettable. “The 70th anniversary is very important to highlight the suffering that happens if a nuclear bomb detonates, and it is not a power-politics issue or an attempt to rewrite history — we just want to make sure that the world knows what a nuclear bomb does when used,” she noted.

NPT review conferences have been held since 1975. The 2005 meeting also failed to produce a substantive consensus document. The treaty counts roughly 190 signatories.

May 24, 2015

NPT review conference’s failure to reach accord disappoints aging hibakusha

http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/social_affairs/AJ201505240014

THE ASAHI SHIMBUN

Survivors of the 1945 atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki expressed disappointment over the failure of signatories at a world nuclear nonproliferation conference to reach a consensus on steps toward nuclear nonproliferation and disarmament.

The 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) concluded on May 22 without approval of a final document due to opposition from nuclear powers. "It was regrettable that there was no progress in the movement on this 70th anniversary of the 1945 atomic bombings," said Terumi Tanaka, 83, the chief secretariat of Nihon Hidankyo (Japan Confederation of A- and H-Bomb Sufferers Organizations).

The organization sent a delegation comprising 50 A-bomb survivors, known as hibakusha, and others to New York for the ninth review conference of the nuclear nonproliferation treaty.

During the four-week session, about 190 signatories comprehensively reviewed the implementation of the NPT.

Toshiyuki Mimaki, 73, deputy president of Nihon Hidankyo's chapter in Hiroshima, who recently visited New York for this year's review conference, said time is running out for hibakusha to see the world making progress toward the nonproliferation and abolition of nuclear weapons.

"We can live only so many years, and it is disappointing to think that we may not be able to see a nuclear-free world in our lifetime," he said.

With 2015 marking the 70th anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the end of World War II, the average age of the hibakusha reached 79.44 at the end of March last year.

As he spoke about his experience of the A-bombing to citizens from the United States and elsewhere, listeners seemed to realize the horrendous consequences of nuclear warfare.

So, it was devastating to see the United States and other nuclear powers oppose the adoption of the final document, Mimaki said.

"U.S. President Barack Obama even received a Nobel Peace Prize for his commitment to abolishing nuclear weapons, so I can barely understand the U.S. opposition to the final document," he said.

Hiroshima Mayor Kazumi Matsui, who asked world leaders to work toward the signing of a multilateral treaty to outlaw nuclear weapons at the conference, released a statement expressing regret over its unfruitful outcome.

Nagasaki Mayor Tomihisa Taue, who called for world leaders to visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki to learn about the disastrous consequences of a nuclear bombing, also expressed disappointment.

"The conference's outcome can undermine confidence in the current NPT framework," he said.

Meanwhile, Haruko Moritaki, 76, a co-representative of the citizens group Hiroshima Alliance for Nuclear Weapons Abolition, said it was a positive sign that more than 100 countries supported a covenant proposed by Australia to regulate nuclear weapons during the NPT review conference.

"Citizens from around the world must gather together to ride this new tide," she said.

Disappointing

Disappointing NPT conference

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2015/05/26/editorials/disappointing-npt-conference/#.VWVicUbwmot>

A four week U.N. conference to improve compliance with the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) ended Friday even without adopting a final document. The failure of the NPT review conference, which took place 70 years after the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, is highly regrettable, especially in view of the achievements at the previous meeting held in 2010. A 64-point action plan adopted in the 2010 conference said, among other things, that “the nuclear weapons states commit to undertake further efforts to reduce and ultimately eliminate all types of nuclear weapons, deployed and non-deployed, including through unilateral, bilateral, regional and multilateral measures.”

This year’s conference was held at a time when dark clouds hang over efforts to reduce nuclear arms. Although the United States and Russia signed the New START (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty) in April 2010 and it came into force in February 2011, the confrontation between the two powers in the Ukraine crisis has prevented them from making progress in efforts to cut nuclear weapons. In March, Russian President Vladimir Putin disclosed on a TV program that Moscow was ready to put its nuclear forces on alert to cope with a possible NATO intervention in the Ukraine crisis a year ago. China is seeking to attain operational capability of submarine-launched ballistic missiles so that its navy will have a “first credible long-range sea-based nuclear deterrent.” North Korea claimed in early May that it successfully test-launched an SLBM from a submerged submarine — a development that could eventually pose a serious threat to the U.S.

Held amid these difficult circumstances, the review conference had all the more significance and could have played an important role in pushing for progress in nuclear weapons reduction and nonproliferation.

The draft of the final document, which did not see the light of day, included recommendation that the United Nations set up a working group to carry out studies for one year from September on effective steps to achieve cuts in nuclear arms. It also called on nuclear weapons states — the U.S., Russia, Britain, France and China, which are also the veto-wielding permanent members of the U.N. Security Council — to issue regular reports on their efforts to reduce nuclear arms, including the number and types of warheads they possess and their deployment, for reviews by the 2017 and 2019 gatherings to prepare for the next NPT review conference and for the 2020 review conference itself.

True, it would be unrealistic to expect the NPT member states to bring about a turnaround in the international situation for the reduction and nonproliferation of nuclear weapons just by holding a review conference. The outcomes of such conferences, held every five years, reflect the dynamics of international politics. But **the failure of the latest conference should serve as a reminder that the countries that signed and ratified the NPT should make steady efforts to make the nonproliferation regime effective and achieve a reduction in nuclear arms.**

Several factors contributed to the collapse of the review conference. The participants were unable to overcome differences over a call for a regional conference on banning weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. The proposed gathering would not discuss regional security issues. The proposal, made by Egypt and other Arab countries, was clearly aimed at the nuclear weapons that Israel allegedly possesses. The call was unacceptable to Israel, which is not a party to the NPT but attended the conference as an observer for the first time in 20 years, and to the U.S. Britain and Canada joined them in opposition. U.S. Undersecretary of State for Arms Control and International Security Rose Gottemoeller accused Egypt and the other Arab states of imposing “unrealistic and unworkable conditions” on the discussions at the conference.

The nuclear weapons powers and non-nuclear weapons states also could not bridge the gap that separates them regarding the path toward the abolition of nuclear weapons. Taking a cue from the 2010 NPT review

conference, which expressed “deep concern at the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons,” Austria, Mexico and other non-nuclear weapons countries stressed the need for a legal framework to secure a road map toward the abolition of nuclear arms. An earlier draft of the final document called on the NPT member states to consider legal measures, including a treaty to ban nuclear weapons. But this provision was deleted from the final draft after the nuclear weapons powers opposed it. Still, it is important to note that the humanitarian impact of nuclear arms was an important part of the discussions at the conference. The provision was proposed against the background of a speech by Austrian Foreign Minister Sebastian Kurz. With the backing of 159 of the 191 NPT member states, he said, “The only way to guarantee that nuclear weapons will never be used again is through their total elimination.” Austria hosted a major international conference on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons in Vienna in December. In the wake of the review conference, **a move to seek a ban on nuclear weapons outside the NPT framework may accelerate.**

Japan attempted to include an invitation for world leaders to visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki in the document. But the attempt was blocked by China, which said it portrays a “partial interpretation” of history with Japan seen as a “victim,” rather than a “victimizer.” China’s action disappointed survivors of the atomic bombings. It is regrettable that Beijing has ignored the simple fact that a nuclear attack causes irreparable harm to large numbers of innocent people.

But Japan on its part should realize that such visits as it proposed constitute only a peripheral part of the efforts it must make to help realize a world without nuclear weapons. While Japan is the only country that suffered nuclear attacks, it continues to rely on the U.S. nuclear umbrella. This is a fundamental contradiction for Japan. This nation should seriously consider how it can fulfill its special responsibility as the sole victim of atomic bombings in the global efforts to reduce and eventually eradicate the dangers posed by nuclear weapons.

Interview with A. Minty

May 25, 2015

INTERVIEW/ Nuclear powers should fulfill 'unequivocal undertaking,' says South African ambassador

<http://ajw.asahi.com/article/views/opinion/AJ201505250086>

By MASATO TAINAKA/ Staff Writer

NEW YORK--Abdul Samad Minty, a South African ambassador to Geneva, delivered a passionate 27-minute speech despite being allotted only three minutes at the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

But the nuclear powers blocked the approval of a final document at the conference, which concluded May 22.

In an interview with The Asahi Shimbun, Minty, 75, demanded the five nuclear powers and all signatories to the NPT fulfill the “unequivocal undertaking” for the abolition of nuclear weapons as adopted in 2000’s NPT final document.

Minty, regarded as an influential advocate of nonproliferation, has been a delegate in the review conference since 1995, when his country proposed the indefinite extension of the treaty.

South Africa in 1993 declared that it had previously developed a nuclear capability, which had been dismantled before it joined the NPT. The nation is also one of the six non-nuclear states in the New Agenda Coalition (NAC) and has recently been promoting a humanitarian initiative to achieve a legally binding procedure to ban nuclear weapons.

Excerpts of the interview follow:

Question: It was very impressive to me that your 27-minute speech during the NPT Review Conference mentioned the 1995 South African proposal to extend the NPT indefinitely based on the historic grand bargain that Nuclear Weapon States (NWS) will disarm while others will not proliferate. Why did you remind (the member states) of that now?

Abdul Samad Minty: I was in the 1995, 2000, 2005, 2010 delegations. I led the delegations after 2000. I was in all of them. Because it’s always important to have what we did 20 years ago and because that has not been achieved.

Q: In other words, you have not witnessed that achievement?

A: No one has witnessed that they’ve achieved disarmament; even the NWS say they are only going to reduce their weapons.

Q: You even said in your speech that NPT is, in effect, a NWS Treaty?

A: No, I did not say that. I said if they do not take steps here to advance the disarmament agenda, then there is the danger that everyone will look at the NPT as “an NWS Treaty,” not as an NPT. That has a lot of danger for all of us.

Q: You also mentioned the responsibility of nuclear-umbrella states including Japan. Why did you mention that?

A: If we continue on the basis that the nuclear weapons states must keep nuclear weapons for their security, then that’s extended to say that umbrella states also need security, so this is the path to proliferation. Because other countries who don’t have nuclear weapons will begin to ask, “Why is it that some countries need it for their security, and we are told we don’t need it for our (own) security?”

For example, if you are smoking, you can’t tell everyone else not to smoke!

So it’s a very dangerous approach to say, “For our security, we need nuclear weapons,” so that’s why we said all of us NNWS are prepared to help the NWS to protect their security without nuclear weapons because that is what we have to do. They say that’s what we have to do. If we have to do it, and they (NWS) require it from us, why should they not do it? They should be setting an example, not doing the opposite. If others then try to follow that example, it will make for a very dangerous point.

Q: You used the metaphor of smoking ... a nuclear weapon could be stigmatized just like tobacco?

A: No. It’s worse than that. You see, the way they talk about it is **they are addicted to nuclear weapons**. They cannot leave it. Even after we had the Prague speech and we had high hopes at 2010, after that people began to say not in our lifetime. Every day we have even one nuclear weapon existing in the world it is very dangerous. One nuclear weapon could kill thousands of people--even more, because they are modernized.

Q: At this review conference, a call for world leaders to visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki has created controversy.

A: So Hiroshima and Nagasaki will look like a small exercise compared to the current destructive power. I've been to Hiroshima and Nagasaki twice in the '70s, so when I went there in '75 and '76 I could meet some of the victims. **The one thing it tells us is Hiroshima and Nagasaki stand as a symbol to the world that the world must never allow that to happen again.** The only way the world cannot allow that to happen again is by eliminating all nuclear weapons. What is it that we are waiting for? And the big question, as Nelson Mandela asked some years ago, is what do they (NWS) wish to do with the nuclear weapons? Where are they going to use it? As long as you keep it as deterrence, you are encouraging others to have the same or more weapons. That is not the way to end it. They have to take steps.

That's why we suggested the five nuclear powers should get together and discuss among themselves their deterrence and security and so on because much of their security and deterrence is in relation to each other, not in relation to us, because we have no weapons like that.

So they need to do that and move forward. But they've just worked out some glossary, they're not moving forward with it. So we want them to discuss their nuclear doctrines in that context and then reduce and then eliminate.

Q: An overwhelming majority of the states joined that humanitarian discourse now, but then we see in the conference that France is saying 55 percent of the world's population still relies on nuclear deterrence. What do you think of that argument?

A: You cannot argue that because governments have nuclear deterrence--they do not have a vote (on it). The majority of the people in many countries also do not want nuclear weapons, but the governments keep them. So you cannot argue that because the government has nuclear weapons, the population as a whole is totally in support—it's not true. I have taken part in the '60s in big demonstrations and marches in the United States--from 1958, 1959, 1960 onward, and thousands of people marched to say they did not want nuclear weapons.

It's not true that because a government may have nuclear weapons that all its population supports having them. Nowhere in the world have they taken a vote like that among their people about nuclear weapons.

It's a false thing to claim that because big countries with large populations have nuclear weapons therefore all the people support nuclear weapons. If people are aware of the issue and they are asked, no one is going to accept they want a situation where they want to have mutually assured destruction. You must be sure if anyone has nuclear weapons, you'll also have them so you'll kill everyone. That cannot be favorable.

Q: We've reached the last document that omits any wording about a future convention on nuclear weapons that the previous draft had. Instead, the final draft mentions the United Nations General Assembly working group extending the discussion.

A: No, no, they aren't extending anything to the UNGA because the NPT has got the decision from 2000 where they said the NWS will unequivocally give up nuclear arms.

Q: An unequivocal undertaking?

A: Right. So it says so. And any other suggestion that is supposed to help in some way, there's no doubt about the (unequivocal) commitment.

Is the NPT still worth something?

May 26, 2015

NPT shows signs of fraying

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2015/05/26/commentary/world-commentary/npt-shows-signs-of-fraying/#.VWVi3kbwmos>

by Ramesh Thakur

CANBERRA – The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) is the latest Cold War era pillar of global order to show signs of fraying and no longer being capable of coping with contemporary challenges. The ninth NPT five-yearly review conference, after four weeks of deliberations and negotiations, ended in acrimony on Friday instead of with a consensus document.

Although regrettable, this was not unexpected. For one thing, based on historical cycles, the 2000 conference was a success, 2005 was a failure, 2010 a success, and so the failure of the 2015 conference fits the **pattern of alternating success and failure every five years**. For another, the mood of optimism from 2010 had been steadily fading and had given way to outright pessimism by the end of last year, with tensions over Ukraine renewing interest in the role of nuclear weapons, no end to North Korea's nuclear provocations, growing arsenals in all the Asian nuclear armed states, no sign of a Mideast conference on creating a nuclear-weapon-free zone (NWFZ) as called for by the 2010 conference, and even the November deadline for a deal on Iran having been missed.

The framework agreement on Iran in early April set the scene for a marginally more optimistic start to the conference in late April but not, evidently, sufficient to overcome the serious clash of interests, values and perspectives. Two issues proved particularly contentious.

The first was that of a Middle East NWFZ. On the one hand, the Western powers led by the United States and United Kingdom are extremely naive in believing that Israel can be shielded permanently from scrutiny of its undeclared nuclear arsenal but any other regional power can be stopped, by force if necessary, from getting the bomb.

On the other hand, Egypt — claiming to represent the Arab bloc — was disingenuous in trying to use a NWFZ as a means of achieving Israeli nuclear disarmament by stealth. All NWFZs ratify an existing nuclear-weapon-free status. None compares with the Middle East where one country already has the bomb, is not recognized by some neighbors, and faces threats of destruction from some. The entire region has also been in extraordinary upheaval from an Arab spring of hope that mutated into a winter of discontent.

The second unbridgeable divide was that between the five nuclear powers and the others. The NPT reflected several bargains, including a promise by those with nuclear weapons to negotiate their elimination in return for those without agreeing to renounce the option forever. Of the 128,000 bombs to have been built since 1945, 98 percent have been by Moscow and Washington. There are still some 16,400 weapons built since 1945, 98 percent have been by Moscow and Washington. There are still some 16,400 weapons held by nine countries, with Russia and the U.S. accounting for 15,300 of the global stockpile. All nine are busy modernizing and upgrading, and not one has given credible evidence of abandoning the nuclear weapons option. Their resistance to any benchmarked and timetabled calendar of

denuclearization leaves others singularly unimpressed by self-congratulatory proclamations of remarkable progress in meeting NPT commitments.

The obvious question that arises is: **Is the NPT still fit for purpose or has its shelf life expired?** If it has passed its use by date, how can we manage the transition to a post-NPT world without endangering the global nuclear order that is firmly anchored in the NPT, and what might a post-NPT order look like?

The NPT indeed suffers from many shortcomings. **Crucially, four of the nine nuclear-armed countries are not NPT members**, producing a substantial gap in its core business. Former Canadian disarmament ambassador Paul Meyer, now with the Simons Foundation in Vancouver, catalogs other NPT shortcomings with respect to the division between haves and have-nots, the corrosive effects of violations that go unpunished, and reporting and institutional deficits (a five yearly review conference is not much of an institution to undergird the regime).

An important clue to the answer on the post-NPT order lies in the humanitarian impacts statement. Three conferences have been held on this topic in the last three years, in Norway, Mexico and Austria. The numbers of governments and civil society supporting the movement has snowballed, with 159 countries subscribing to the statement at the review conference. Its essence can be distilled into three propositions:

- 1. Neither any country individually, nor the international system collectively including international organizations, have the capacity to cope with the humanitarian consequences of any nuclear war;**
- 2. It is in the interests of the very survival of humanity that nuclear weapons are never used again, under any circumstances;**
- 3. The only guarantee of non-use of nuclear weapons again is their complete elimination.**

Bearing these three propositions in mind, concerned governments and civil society representatives will likely now look to independent initiatives outside the NPT framework. One option would be to remain silent on the nuclear arsenals but ban any use of nuclear weapons, the most indiscriminately inhumane weapons ever invented, on the grounds that any use would violate the very core of international humanitarian law.

A second would be to ban the possession as well as use. Following the precedent of the Ottawa convention banning anti-personnel land mines, this could be done by the overwhelming majority of non-nuclear countries acting on their own as a powerful means of entrenching the anti-nuclear weapon norm. That is, although not legally binding on non-signatories, it would erect a powerful normative barrier and delegitimize the possession of nuclear weapons by everyone, thereby ending what has always been one of the most troubling aspects of the NPT, namely a world of nuclear apartheid.

The third, potentially the best but in practice the most challenging option to aim for, would be the negotiation of a nuclear weapons convention (NWC) to take its place alongside the companion conventions banning biological and chemical weapons. It is worth noting that the chemical weapons convention (CWC) in particular has been an outstanding success. The CWC was signed in 1993 and came into effect in 1997 and its implementing organization has seen the destruction of 85 percent of the world's chemical weapons stockpile. In other words, 18 years after its entry into force, the dismantlement agenda is still not complete but the multilateral convention is universally acknowledged as having been a great success. By contrast all the progress in reducing nuclear arsenals has resulted from unilateral actions and bilateral agreements.

A NWC could follow the same route: negotiate, draft and sign a universal, binding, verifiable and enforceable convention; establish an implementing agency and verification machinery; and then oversee the dismantlement of all existing nuclear weapon stockpiles with an emphasis on safety and verified destruction, no matter how much longer the process takes after the entry into force of the NWC.

Ramesh Thakur is director of the Center for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament, Australian National University.

Failure of NPT conference alarming

May 25, 2015

EDITORIAL: Failure of NPT confab to reach accord sounds alarm on nuke proliferation

<http://ajw.asahi.com/article/views/editorial/AJ201505250057>

Curbing the proliferation of atomic weapons is the duty of the entire world in handing over our planet to future generations.

The 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) wound up its latest meeting at U.N. headquarters in New York without delivering any results. The review meeting is held every five years.

The failure to reach a consensus on the final document, which would have spelled out an agreement by all signatory states, has put a big question mark over the sustainability of the NPT arrangement.

The global community should have a serious sense of alarm over this development. Countries need to step up their efforts in the coming years to mend and repair the NPT regime.

At the same time, we hope more efforts will be focused on encouraging movements that seek to abolish nuclear arms, not necessarily on the sole basis of agreements to be reached at conferences, but also through efforts of a group of countries that are ready to cooperate.

On the surface, text that referred to denuclearizing the Middle East was the principal factor behind the failure to reach an agreement. The United States, which is staunchly pro-Israel, and other countries refused to give their approval to the text, which had been drafted under the lead of Arab nations.

But the crux of the problem does not lie with the Middle East issue. The most serious question lies in the fact that the rift and confrontation between the nuclear and non-nuclear nations have grown so deep that they can no longer be hidden from view.

While non-nuclear states emphasized the inhumane nature of atomic weaponry during the review conference, the nuclear powers expressed their reservations and took pains to dilute verbal expressions. The NPT authorizes the United States, Russia, Britain, France and China alone to possess nuclear arms, and obligates those five nations, in exchange, to “pursue negotiations in good faith” for nuclear disarmament. In reality, however, not only are they negative about disarmament, but one of them has gone so far as to make intimidating remarks about the potential use of nuclear weapons, raising the levels of discontent on the part of non-nuclear powers.

Israel, India and Pakistan, which are not signatories to the NPT, already have nuclear weapons, whereas North Korea continues to pursue its self-centered program of nuclear development. A chain reaction could take place if we were to allow more nations to go nuclear. The global situation is growing ever more precarious.

The inhumane nature of nuclear arms was also taken up squarely at the conference as a matter for debate and gained better understanding from different nations. Japan should more actively back up movements that seek to create a new legal framework, such as the proposed Nuclear Weapons Convention, which would outlaw nuclear weapons on grounds of their inhumanity.

Japan proposed that leaders of the world visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The draft final document included the basic point of that proposal, even though the specific place names had been dropped.

We hope the government of Japan will extend invitations to world leaders, including from the five major nuclear powers, disarmament experts, young people and others in continuing to actively promote awareness of the inhumanity of nuclear arms.

Non-nuclear powers that depend on the nuclear umbrella of another nation for their own security, including Japan, are never free from the dilemma. But that does not mean Japan, which experienced two atomic bombings, should remain silent on the inhumane nature of atomic weapons.

Japan should take the lead in pursuing the goal of reducing the role of atomic weapons in the realm of security, in line with the draft final document, and seek to eventually outlaw them.

--The Asahi Shimbun, May 24

Less nuclear warheads (but still 15,850 of them)

June 16, 2015

The number of nuclear weapons decreases

http://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/english/news/20150616_05.html

Jun. 16, 2015 - Updated 01:05 UTC+2

A Swedish think tank reports that the overall number of nuclear warheads around the globe has declined, but China has bucked the trend.

The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute published its annual report on Monday. It estimates that 9 states possessed 15,850 nuclear warheads as of this January. That is down about 500 from a year earlier.

The report says the prime reason for the decline is the continuous reduction of warheads held by the US and Russia, based on a bilateral treaty. But it points out that the pace is now slower than it was a decade ago.

The report notes that among other Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty signatories, the UK reduced its arsenal by 10, while France remained at about the same level.

The report estimates that China added 10 warheads.

Three Non-NPT signatories, Israel, India and Pakistan, are believed to have kept their possessions at the same levels, ranging between 80 and 120 each. North Korea's warhead holdings are estimated at 6 to 8.

The institute says India and Pakistan are expanding their capability to produce nuclear substances, while China is increasing its arsenal by downsizing warheads.

It notes that the nuclear-armed countries are working on modernization programs, which suggests none of them will give up their nuclear arsenals in the foreseeable future.

Intimidation from Russia unacceptable

June 19, 2015

Editorial: Russia should stop intimidation through nuclear weapons

<http://mainichi.jp/english/english/perspectives/news/20150619p2a00m0na014000c.html>

Russian President Vladimir Putin has once again resorted to the threat of nuclear arms for intimidation after he announced a plan to additionally deploy more than 40 intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) by the end of the year. It is intolerable for Russia to use nuclear weapons as a tool of intimidation in order to demonstrate its stance to confront European and North American countries with force.

Putin came under fire from the international community when he said in a TV program aired in March 2015 that Russia had been prepared to put its nuclear forces on alert when the country unilaterally annexed the Crimea Peninsula in the south of Ukraine last year.

The Russian president made the latest controversial remark at the opening ceremony of an exhibition of Russian-made weapons on the outskirts of Moscow. In addition to ICBMs, Putin said Russia will introduce new tanks, submarines and radar facilities to increase the ratio of the most advanced weapons to its military arsenal.

Russia's ICBMs are long-range missiles targeting the United States. Putin emphasized that the additional deployment of ICBMs is aimed at countering a missile defense plan that the United States is promoting in Europe, saying that the ICBMs Russia is set to deploy "are capable of breaking through the world's most advanced missile defense system."

Putin has expressed stiff opposition to the missile defense program on the grounds that it would destabilize the balance of nuclear deterrent power between the United States and Russia, and threatened to take countermeasures.

The deployment is also aimed apparently at warning European and North American countries against putting pressure on Russia over the Ukrainian issue. The United States is considering deploying a massive number of heavy weapons in eastern European and three Baltic countries with which Russia has borders. A Russian deputy defense minister placed the blame on European and North American countries for the rising tensions, saying, "The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is forcing us into an arms race. Russia believes that it has no choice but to use its nuclear deterrence to counter NATO, which is superior in terms of conventional weapons. However, Russians apparently remember that a nuclear arms race during the Cold War led to extreme global tension, which was described by some as being within an inch of a nuclear war, and that the arms race gave the Soviet economy a heavy burden, which became a remote

cause of the collapse of the Soviet Union. To defuse the crisis, the United States and the Soviet Union began dialogue and ended the Cold War. The clock must not be turned back.

Originally, the ongoing dispute was triggered by Russia's annexation of Crimea and its support for pro-Russian armed insurgents in eastern Ukraine in violation of international law. It is inappropriate that Russia is shifting the blame to European and North American countries saying these countries "are cornering Russia."

Furthermore, Russia should not heighten international tensions by using such an excuse to justify its deployment of additional nuclear arms. Russia and the United States are obligated by the new Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty to substantially decrease their strategic nuclear weapons by 2018. Japan and other members of the international community are urging the two countries to steadily carry out such arms reductions and further cut other types of nuclear weapons. Russia should be aware of the danger of intimidation using nuclear arms and resume calm dialogue with the United States.

June 19, 2015(Mainichi Japan)

Standard history teaching can be wrong

Most in U.S. still think atomic bombings were justified, but change seen in young

<http://mainichi.jp/english/english/newsselect/news/20150721p2a00m0na010000c.html>

In his class at a high school in Orange County, California, teacher Monty Armstrong always asks his students what could have been done in place of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in World War II.

In a recent holding of this class discussion, his class reached the conclusion that the atomic bomb was the best out of a number of undesirable options for ending the war. This is in line with what, according to Armstrong, is the standard teaching on the issue in the U.S.: that while nuclear weapons are not a good thing, the U.S. used them in order to bring the war to a close. The most popular line of thought in America continues to be that the A-bombs were justified because they brought the war to a quick end and avoided massive casualties on both sides.

San Diego clinical psychiatrist Akiko Mikamo's father experienced the Hiroshima atomic bombing. In 2013, she published an English book of her father's experiences with the Hiroshima bombing. The book is not a criticism of the devastation wrought by the bomb, but a telling of the feelings of her father at that time. It expresses the importance of forgiveness and sympathy. Mikamo says that while many middle and senior-aged Americans stiffen and appear to feel a sense of guilt when she brings up the atomic bombing, she feels that young people can sympathize with the bombing victims and are willing to listen. Mikamo spoke at classes in junior high and high schools in the suburbs of Los Angeles this March. She recounts that when she told American students a story of Japanese who were orphaned by the atomic bomb but moved forward with their lives without hating America, the students were moved.

Jeannine McGuigan, principal of Wilson Elementary School, worked to have Mikamo speak at her school. She says that until now Americans have not thought about what happened beneath the mushroom clouds,

partly because they feel guilty about it. She hopes that by spreading education that shows the viewpoint of the bombed side, it will instill in her students more desire for peace.

According to a survey by the Pew Research Center this April, 56 percent of Americans think the atomic bombings were justified, while 34 percent think they were not. However, a large gap between age groups can be seen, with 70 percent of those 65 and over saying the bombings were justified and only 47 percent of those between 18 and 29 saying so.

Marshall Islands sue nuke-possessing countries

July 21, 2015

News Navigator: What's behind Marshall Islands' lawsuit against nuclear-armed countries?

<http://mainichi.jp/english/english/perspectives/news/20150721p2a00m0na003000c.html>

The Marshall Islands, site of the United States' nuclear bomb tests for 12 years starting in 1946, sued the U.S. government in U.S. federal court in April last year on the grounds that the U.S. is not conducting talks on reducing nuclear arms as called for in the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). The Mainichi answers common questions readers may have about this suit.

Question: Who else is the Marshall Islands suing?

Answer: The Marshall Islands is also suing the nine nuclear weapon-possessing countries, including those not officially recognized as such -- the United States, Great Britain, Russia, France, China, India, Pakistan, North Korea and Israel -- at the International Court of Justice on the same grounds. The Marshall Islands, site of 67 nuclear tests, is demanding these countries reduce their nuclear arms as per the NPT.

Q: Is there support for the Marshall Islands' lawsuit in the U.S.?

A: Yes, there is. A major Seattle law firm has taken on their case for free, saying the Marshall Islands' position is correct. While the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation, a California anti-nuclear weapon non-government organization (NGO), has been supporting the lawsuit as a consultant. The NGO's president, David Krieger, says his group is supporting the lawsuit to put pressure on nuclear-armed countries to reduce their stockpiles, and that he hopes other countries will follow in the Marshall Islands' footsteps. A U.S. district court turned down the Marshall Islands' suit in February, but the Marshall Islands is appealing. (Answers by Hiromi Nagano, Los Angeles Bureau)

70 years after Bomb

July 22, 2015

Cora Henry: "70 Years After Bomb, Hiroshima Activists Defy Nuclear Energy Industry"

<http://www.beyondnuclear.org/home/2015/7/22/cora-henry-70-years-after-bomb-hiroshima-activists-defy-nucl.html>

Kosei Mito, showing Elisabeth Fernandes, of Osaka, and her niece his research on nuclear power. They are on the banks of the Motoyasu River, in front of the Atom Dome. Mr. Mito's guide badge, with an anti-nuclear weapons symbol, reads "IN-UTERO SURVIVOR." Photo taken March 12, 2015 by Cora Henry in Hiroshima, Japan. Cora Henry, a journalism student at Indiana University, has published an article entitled "70 Years After Bomb, Hiroshima Activists Defy Nuclear Energy Industry."

Henry's article explores the history of the evolving position of Hiroshima's *Hibakusha*, literally "radiation-affected people," towards nuclear power. She interviewed survivors of the bombing at the iconic remains of the Hiroshima Prefectural Industry Promotion Building, known as the Atomic-Bomb Dome.

In the aftermath of the Fukushima nuclear catastrophe, an anti-nuclear power consensus has emerged in both major *Hibakusha* organizations, with some members now very active in the ongoing campaign to resist atomic reactor restarts across Japan.

Japanese people "keepers and shepherds of Planet Earth"

July 26, 2015

Former ICJ head says Japan is world's conscience against nuclear weapons, power

http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/social_affairs/AJ201507260018

By ROY K. AKAGAWA/ AJW Staff Writer

HIROSHIMA--Due to their bearing witness to the destruction of the atomic bomb and a nuclear disaster, Japan and its people are "the keepers and shepherds of Planet Earth."

That was the key conclusion of the keynote address by former International Court of Justice President Mohammed Bedjaoui on July 25 at the International Symposium for Peace 2015 titled "The Road to Nuclear Abolition" held at the International Conference Center Hiroshima.

"Japan becomes the only country in the world to have been the victim of both military and civilian nuclear energy, having experienced the crazy danger of the atom, both in its military applications, destruction of life and its beneficial civilian use, which has now turned into a nightmare with the serious incidents of Fukushima," he said.

He was referring to not only the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945, but also the accident at the Fukushima No. 1 nuclear power plant in 2011, triggered by the Great East Japan Earthquake and tsunami.

Bedjaoui was the president of the ICJ in 1996 when it issued an advisory opinion that marked an important turning point in the international movement to ban nuclear weapons.

Other participants took part in a panel discussion in which they presented their views on what the atomic bombings mean today. The event was sponsored by the Hiroshima municipal government, the Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation and The Asahi Shimbun.

Masako Ikegami, a professor of decision science at the Tokyo Institute of Technology, said the passing of 70 years since the atomic bombings was sufficient time to consider the weapons in a new light.

"In humanitarian terms, nuclear weapons are unacceptable, and discussions have to move toward acknowledging their use as a crime against humanity," she said.

Max McCoy, a university professor and writer from the United States, visited Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1986 as part of a project to bring U.S. journalists to Japan.

Showing the photos he took at that time and recalling the interviews he had with hibakusha, McCoy talked about the importance of passing on the experiences of those who survived the atomic bombing.

"We need to remember the testimony of the hibakusha and to know the truth of what (the atomic bombings) were like," McCoy said.

The symposium began with guest speaker Dai Tamesue talking about what would be needed to maintain peace.

"I believe a major problem arises when an atmosphere develops in society which makes it difficult to speak up in a different way from the vast majority," Tamesue, a retired athlete, said.

He was asked to speak because he is a third-generation hibakusha. Tamesue, who was the first Japanese track athlete to win a medal at the world track and field championships, was born and raised in Hiroshima. His grandmother was in Hiroshima on Aug. 6, 1945, when the atomic bomb was dropped on the city.

Postdam, 2015

July 26, 2015

Hiroshima, Nagasaki A-bomb victims remembered in Germany

<http://mainichi.jp/english/english/newsselect/news/20150726p2g00m0in007000c.html>

POTSDAM, Germany (Kyodo) -- German and Japanese citizens in the German city of Potsdam remembered on Saturday the victims of the U.S. atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki nearly 70 years ago.

The city near Berlin is known as a place where U.S. President Harry Truman in 1945 ordered the dropping of the bombs on the Japanese cities.

During Saturday's event, participants released about 50 lanterns onto Lake Griebnitzsee. Truman had stayed at a lakeside building while he and other Allied leaders held what is known as the Potsdam Conference to discuss conditions to be attached to Japan's surrender in World War II.

At a ceremony before the lanterns were released, an organizer said the day's remembrance was not just for the victims but for the future, adding that a world without nuclear weapons must be realized.

Messages from the mayors of the two Japanese cities were also read out.

The Potsdam Conference was held between July 17 and Aug. 2 in 1945. The United States dropped an atomic bomb on Hiroshima on Aug. 6 and another bomb on Nagasaki three days later.

On Aug. 15 that year, Emperor Hirohito announced to the nation Japan's acceptance of the Potsdam Declaration, in which the United States, Britain and China demanded Japan's unconditional surrender and which was later joined by the Soviet Union.

Peace message from Hiroshima children

August 3, 2015

Children deliver anti-war message at Atomic Bomb Dome in Hiroshima

http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/social_affairs/AJ201508030023



Children observe a silent prayer with illustrations and messages of peace in front of the Atomic Bomb Dome in Hiroshima on Aug. 2. (Yoshihisa Aoyama)

August 03, 2015

By TAKASHI OKUMA/ Staff Writer

HIROSHIMA--Messages of peace and hopes for a nuclear-free world appeared on about 700 pieces of cloth around the Atomic Bomb Dome on Aug. 2 ahead of the 70th anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima.

Around 80 elementary and junior high school children gathered at the dome, a symbol of the devastation and a World Heritage site, for the event organized by Hiroshima Heiwa no Ribon no Kai (Hiroshima peace ribbon association).

The event has been held once every five years since 1990 before Aug. 6, when the city was flattened by the 1945 dropping of the world's first atomic bomb.

The children held up many of the anti-war messages. Some of the cloths were draped over nearby trees. Chiho Korenaga, a 13-year-old resident of Hiroshima, delivered a message after participants observed a silent prayer at 8:15 a.m., the time the atomic bomb was dropped.

"It is the first step toward peace that we, the young generation, do not forget the sad incident," she said.

Hiroshima Symposium on nuclear abolition (2)

HIROSHIMA SYMPOSIUM ON NUCLEAR ABOLITION (2)/ Dai Tamesue: Efforts must be made to prevent atmosphere where free speech is stifled

http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/social_affairs/AJ201508030031

AJW

With this year marking the 70th anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the International Symposium for Peace 2015 titled "The Road to Nuclear Weapons Abolition" was held on July 25 at the International Conference Center Hiroshima.

After a keynote speech by Dr. Mohammed Bedjaoui, a former president of the International Court of Justice, and a speech by retired track athlete Dai Tamesue, three experts joined in a panel discussion to talk about what must be done to work toward abolishing nuclear weapons.

The final part of this two-part package contains excerpts by Tamesue's speech as well as the opening remarks of the three experts.

Excerpts of Tamesue's speech follow:

I first became aware that I was from Hiroshima when I went to Tokyo to enter university. There were some people who were very surprised when I told them I had a family member who experienced the atomic bombing. My grandmother lived near ground zero when the atomic bomb was dropped, making me a third-generation hibakusha.

While I believe there is significance in transmitting a message to the world from Hiroshima, what will be important is to continue to transmit that message. It means people of my generation or my children's generation will also have to continue sending out that message.

The problem becomes one of how to get younger people to develop an interest in this issue.

The first time I developed a real feeling of fear about war was while reading a book as a child. It was a tale by a French writer. I felt fear because in a totalitarian atmosphere it becomes very difficult to know exactly when war begins. Because I never personally experienced war, I thought that it was like "OK, we begin war today."

But, after reading books and listening to people, I came to realize there was a general atmosphere that developed and when everyone realized what was happening, it was already too late to reverse course. As a child I thought about what would be possible to resist that trend, if there was no obvious start to the movement.

I believe it is important to always be on alert and thinking about what is going on in the world.

In listening to those who experienced war, what I thought was very fearful was the development of a totalitarian-like atmosphere where one cannot freely say what one believes.

I think what often happens in Japan is not being able to reverse course after some decision has been made, even if in an unclear manner, and it becomes difficult to overturn that decision because it might mean some people in important positions will lose face.

What I ended up thinking about was in what way could individuals raise their voices in opposition and say something is not right before a certain segment of the population has made a decision about the matter. I thought it would be important to raise voices before such a decision was made.

On a personal level, right after the Great East Japan Earthquake, when the situation was very difficult in various areas, there was criticism about athletes continuing with their training.

I have always felt that sports can help to encourage people and that after a few months had passed from the disaster, I felt it might be possible that sports could have such an effect. But, when I wrote on a blog that it was important for athletes to continue training if they were to maintain a level of high performance, I received hundreds of responses within a week criticizing that view.

Under certain circumstances, even normal people can be carried away by the general atmosphere in society at that time.

So I felt that it is important to somehow maintain calm and composure in such difficult times to think and talk about what should be done.

Sharing experiences is important in thinking about how to deal with important issues, such as how to maintain peace.

I believe having people around the world share some common experience is very important in thinking about those people as the same humans. That could become a deterrent to war between such peoples.

In sports, although we may represent different nations, we also share in a larger sense the same feeling as athletes.

I think it is very important to have as many opportunities as possible to speak with people from different generations. Communication over generations becomes important in passing on the actual experiences of the hibakusha.

But, rather than forcing a foregone conclusion on younger people, efforts should be made to have a dialogue so that even younger people can become convinced of what is being said by their elders. While that will be time-consuming, I believe the process is important to produce young people who think deeply about various issues and can make decisions based on their own values. That will produce people who can place the brakes on an atmosphere that begins to envelop society.

Dai Tamesue was born in Hiroshima in 1978. He is the first Japanese athlete to win a medal in a track event at the track and field world championships. He also took part in three straight Olympics. After retiring in 2012, he has been involved in various activities related to sports, social issues and education.

Excerpts of the opening remarks of the three experts:

Masako Ikegami

Re-examining the process behind the decision to drop the atomic bombs, U.S. researchers have found there was the possibility of gaining an early surrender by Japan through the former Soviet Union entering the war and with assurances that the emperor would be maintained, even if the atomic bomb was not used.

Research also shows that work on developing the atomic bomb began even before the attack on Pearl Harbor. The atomic bomb was dropped as a demonstration to the former Soviet Union of the military capabilities that the United States held.

True nuclear abolition will not occur unless the logic of “domination through fear,” which maximizes the psychological effect of nuclear weapons, is eliminated.

Japan has been unable to actively argue that the use of nuclear weapons is a crime against humanity and a war crime because there is the thinking that Japan got what it deserved because it started the war.

Ikegami is a professor at the Tokyo Institute of Technology whose research covers nuclear nonproliferation and disarmament.

Max McCoy

In 1986, I was one of the Akiba Project journalists. I was 26 and working for a small newspaper in Kansas. I thought it was the most significant story a journalist could cover.

I met Yoshito Matsushige (a former photographer for Chugoku Shimbun newspaper in Hiroshima) and I wanted to walk the route that he took from his home toward the heart of the city when he took his famous photos (of the destruction of the atomic bomb).

He had the sense that what he did was important because there had to be a testimony about what went on. His photographs are so valuable in providing a glimpse into that horror that was beyond imagination.

One hibakusha asked me, "Why do you, an American, want to talk about the experience with me?" I took out from my pocket pictures of my two young daughters. I said, "This is the reason I am here." He started to cry. He told me the story of losing his son, and it was very moving.

I went home to publish my work, and some people called me a traitor.

One of the things I took from the (hibakusha) interviews about the nature of truth is that the truth is fact in the context of ordinary human conditions.

When the leaders of the nuclear powers talk about the need to maintain their nuclear stockpiles, they should be required to bring with them to Hiroshima pictures of their loved ones. We should demand that they hold the pictures tightly to their chest while trying to explain the justification for nuclear weapons.

McCoy is a writer, journalist and assistant professor of journalism at Emporia State University in Kansas.

Yasuyoshi Komizo

The atomic bomb was dropped in an urban area where population density was high. Most of those killed were civilians, mainly, innocent children, women and the elderly.

Survivors had to live with health problems, such as leukemia and cancer, as well as face social discrimination. That continues even today, 70 years after the atomic bombs were dropped.

One reason nuclear weapons have not been used in war since Hiroshima and Nagasaki is because hibakusha talked about the inhumanity of the weapons. In order to progress toward abolition, the fact of that inhumanity must spread around the world so it is accepted as common knowledge everywhere.

An essential doubt about nuclear weapons is whether such weapons that can kill hundreds of thousands of people in an instant and which cause suffering for decades among survivors have a role in national security.

A major point should be how to legally ban nuclear weapons.

Nations that possess nuclear weapons or are under a nuclear umbrella as well as all other nations should hold discussions. The important point will be to move the world's leaders through mutual exchanges and dialogue as well as an argument about the need for nuclear abolition.

Komizo is chairman of the Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation. He previously worked at the International Atomic Energy Agency as special assistant to the director-general.

Hiroshima Symposium on nuclear abolition (1)

HIROSHIMA SYMPOSIUM ON NUCLEAR ABOLITION (1)/ Mohammed Bedjaoui: Can humanity abolish the devil's weapon?

http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/social_affairs/AJ201508030027

AJW

With this year marking the 70th anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the International Symposium for Peace 2015 titled "The Road to Nuclear Weapons Abolition" was held on July 25 at the International Conference Center Hiroshima.

After a keynote speech by Dr. Mohammed Bedjaoui, a former president of the International Court of Justice, and a speech by retired track athlete Dai Tamesue, three experts joined in a panel discussion to talk about what must be done to work toward abolishing nuclear weapons.

The first of this two-part package contains the condensed version of the keynote speech delivered by Dr. Mohammed Bedjaoui.

* * *

My first words are inspired by a respectful tribute to all victims of the monstrous tragedy which incurred 70 years ago by the two martyr cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, both devastated by the most destructive weapon ever built.

This is the first time that I come to Hiroshima, this city which has lived through the unutterable suffering committed by man on man. At the moment I am speaking to you, I am filled with an immense respect, in devout tribute to all those who died on 6 and 9 August 1945, and in the days, months and years that followed, were contaminated by radiation and died of atrocious physical and moral pains.

Many died instantaneously, but many also lived to see their lives shredded, as their own wounded flesh, fading away slowly, mercilessly in unbearable suffering. I bow down, in front of the memory of these sufferers, still present in my heart, and hope that their innocent sacrifice will serve the cause of peace in our world.

The destructive power of nuclear weapons is insane. The 1987 report from the commission chaired by Gro Brundtland, former prime minister from Norway, titled "Our Common Future," said that the power of a single thermonuclear bomb at 1 megaton is bigger than that of all explosives used during wars which pierced the history of humankind, meaning higher than that of all the explosives used in combat by humans since their existence on Earth.

But today, in the arsenals of the nuclear powers, there are bombs which are 20 megatons and more, that is to say that each one has an explosive power more than 1,000 times than that of the Hiroshima bomb.

Nuclear weapons (have the capacity to) lead humanity into a "nuclear winter" with casualties to present and future civilian populations. The nature of these weapons of mass destruction is such that it is impossible to confine their destructive impact in space and time to only military targets. Future generations would not be spared. The explosion is accompanied by instantaneous radiation and radioactive fallout. The "period" necessary to expend the harmful effects of one of the byproducts of a nuclear explosion, plutonium 239, is over 20,000 years, which speaks volumes about the suffering future generations may still endure.

The United States and Russia possess a combined total of more than 4,500 nuclear warheads. More than 2,000 of these weapons are ready for action and can be launched in a few minutes to destroy the civilization several times and eliminate all forms of life on Earth.

Following the use of nuclear weapons at Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Albert Camus said, "The mechanical civilization has arrived at its last degree of savagery."

It was requested in international fora that nuclear weapons be made "illegal." However, the International Red Cross Committee, in charge of ensuring that humanitarian law is respected by belligerents, was unable to obtain the ban of nuclear weapons.

The question of the legality of nuclear weapons was raised in December 1994 by the United Nations at the International Court of Justice. At the court's session in November 1995 during an oral presentation, 25 states expressed their point of view and Takashi Hiraoka, mayor of Hiroshima, and Iccho Itoh, mayor of Nagasaki, made moving statements. Hiraoka, after describing the atrocious suffering of the population, and worrying that the reality was even worse, exclaimed:

"I am frustrated that I am incapable of fully expressing these phenomena concerning the Hiroshima tragedy."

He spoke of the perverse effects of the weapon on future generations that were eradicated and condemned even before birth. He continued by saying:

"The personal suffering that the nuclear weapon had silently activated in the deepness of even the protective womb of mothers was the sad omen of what nuclear weapons can do to the human race."

His last words, when looking at me, were:

"The destiny of the human race is in your hands."

Itoh followed with an emotional statement comparing "the gigantic slaughter that blindly hit the civil populations" to "a preview of the Apocalypse." He invited us to enter for a moment into the "Bomb Museum" in Nagasaki and recalled a moving poem written by a 10-year-old girl who heard "moans of agony at the doors of death" without understanding the "reason" for this hell on Earth.

The United Nations General Assembly requested the International Court of Justice to give their advisory opinion on the following question: "Does international law allow the recourse to the threat or the use of nuclear weapons in all circumstances?" One certainly has the right to translate this legal question by another one, more suggestive, "Would (human) intelligence emerge after 15 billion years just to be eliminated in a few minutes by the power of the atom?"

Many nongovernmental organizations, other organizations and simple individuals with various nationalities, sent messages and documentation, signatures, to the court in 1995 and 1996 requesting the court to state that the nuclear weapon was intrinsically illegal. According to the archivist, there were more than 3,000,000 signatures.

The submission to the court revealed unusual action by the NGOs. They offered help to several small states and requested that they present oral statements before the court. This resulted in pressure from the large states requesting the small ones to neither participate nor present their written statements.

First, the court endeavored to determine what was the relevant applicable law, and, once it had examined various fields of international law, concluded that the most directly relevant applicable law was that relating to the use of force, as enshrined in the United Nations Charter, together with the law of armed conflict which regulates the conduct of hostilities, and with the law of neutrality.

The court also noted that it was imperative for it to take into account the unique characteristics of nuclear weapons, and in particular their destructive capacity, their capacity to cause untold human suffering and their ability to cause damage to future generations.

In proceeding to the examination of international humanitarian law, the court highlighted two cardinal principles. The first established the distinction between combatants and noncombatants: States must never target civilians, nor use arms that are incapable of distinguishing between civilian and military

targets. The second principle affirms that it is not permitted to cause superfluous harm to combatants: Thus, states do not have an unlimited right as to the arms they may utilize.

The court found that, as regards the unique characteristics of nuclear weapons, the use of these weapons seemed scarcely reconcilable with respect the demands of the law applicable in armed conflict.

Nonetheless, the court considered that it did not have at its disposal adequate elements to permit concluding definitely and with certainty on the legality or illegality of the use of nuclear weapons.

Having reached this conclusion, the court insisted on observing that the term humanity is bound to suffer from differences of view with regard to the legal status of weapons as deadly as nuclear weapons.

Therefore, it judged that there was reason to end this state of affairs: the complete nuclear disarmament promised for so long seemed to the court to be the best means of reaching this outcome. Thus, the only possible and practical solution was a good faith resolution to conclude nuclear disarmament. The court emphasized the great importance of the consecration, in Article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, of the good faith obligation to negotiate nuclear disarmament.

The court also adopted paragraph 2.E which calls for discussion. It reads as follows:

"It follows from the above-mentioned requirements that the threat or use of nuclear weapons would generally be contrary to the rules of international law applicable in armed conflict, and in particular the principles and rules of humanitarian law.

"However, in view of the current state of international law, and of the elements of fact at its disposal, the court cannot conclude definitively whether the threat or use of nuclear weapons would be lawful or unlawful in an extreme circumstance of self-defense, in which the very survival of a state would be at stake."

In fact, states with nuclear weapons put forward to the court the technological advances which might make possible the manufacture of "clean" bombs, which unduly troubled certain minds and which stopped the court on the threshold of a ruling on the full prohibition of nuclear weapons.

The fault of the court may perhaps lie in having on this occasion delivered an advisory opinion which stopped at only implicitly condemning the use of nuclear weapons rather than ruling more overtly on its prohibition.

There are obstacles to a world without nuclear weapons.

We live in a less safe world.

Our anguished era is one of ruptures: internal ruptures in the conscience of man and concentric fractures in various spheres from family to the system of international relations, through the worlds of school, city, and nation. We live in an era where national consensus is eroded and international consensus dangerously destroyed.

International relations are more and more volatile. Too many negative signs darken the still poorly lit path of peace.

The alarming erosion of the NPT is also an obstacle.

To simplify, we say that the NPT rests on three pillars: nuclear nonproliferation, peaceful uses of the atom and disarmament.

The main purpose of the treaty must be remembered. It was designed to contain the "vertical proliferation" (enhancement and refinement of existing arsenals) and "horizontal proliferation" (limiting the number of nuclear-weapon states.)

But the most important point is that the disarmament envisaged by the NPT as the cornerstone, is now disabled.

For the past 15 years, disarmament is marking time. Worse yet, some of its gains have been questioned in connection with a new policy that expresses a certain disaffection towards the disarmament.

The new strategy of rupture in respect to disarmament revolves around three areas: increasing the "vertical proliferation," the policy of "anti-missile shield" and the idea of a trivialization of preventive use of nuclear weapons.

Thus develops a policy marking a clear disavowal of the NPT and a growing disinterest to address disarmament.

At the Review Conference, from April to May 2000, state parties had finally agreed on an action program of 13 practical steps for the effective implementation of the Treaty to save it from breaking down, but the NPT Review Conference in 2005, has left no room for doubt. States with nuclear weapons have clearly stated that the issue of disarmament was no longer on the agenda, because they considered having already done much in this area during previous years. The 2010 conference adopted a final document with an "Action Plan" containing 64 prospective measures, which was adopted along with a decision to hold a Conference on the Establishment of a Zone free of Nuclear Weapons in the Middle East in 2012. But the 2015 Conference of the NPT was unable to adopt a final document.

Nuclear disarmament is the ultimate goal of all action in the field of nuclear weapons. This goal is no longer utopian and it is the duty of all to seek to attain it more actively than ever.

Let us make an assessment as to what can favor this action today.

In this field, the importance of the role of the international public opinion cannot be ignored.

First, a universal desire to eliminate nuclear weapons altogether is tormenting mankind. All countries, all governments, all people fear the use of nuclear weapons, "weapon of the devil." Its use conjures unanimity against it.

Second, a positive point in the international context is the creation of "nuclear weapon-free zones," regions where countries commit themselves to not establish, make, acquire, test or possess nuclear weapons. The free zones are in 115 states today, which is encouraging. The development of nuclear weapons is also banned in Antarctica, in the underwater space, in the extra-atmospheric space and on the moon.

Third, thanks to a group of lawyers, scientists, diplomats and experts, we have a "model convention on nuclear weapons" which facilitates the task of ambassadors and it was introduced in 1997 at the United Nations by Costa Rica and Malaysia.

The advantage of the existing model is that it shows that nuclear disarmament is possible and that a world without nuclear weapons is not a crazy dream.

The majority of states have lost confidence in the "step-by-step" approach for nuclear disarmament which has been in place until now.

At the NPT 2015 Review Conference, the "humanitarian approach" to nuclear disarmament was largely supported by states.

The United Nations General Assembly has reacted to the noncontinuation of the Conference on Disarmament, which was created in 1978. An "Open-ended Working Group" was set up in November 2012 which studied all the concrete proposals for the elimination of nuclear weapons. The idea of holding a "High-level Conference on Nuclear Disarmament" is gaining momentum. It has now been accepted that the international community cannot accept Review Conferences only every five years and during another half-century without any tangible results.

Lastly, it can be noted that Ban Ki-moon, the secretary-general of the United Nations, has launched a "Five points proposal for the United Nations and security in a world without nuclear weapons." Ban Ki-moon declared to the Review Conference that "2015 is not just another year, it is an opportunity to change the course of history."

But the conference was deceiving. It was not able to adopt a final document.

What are the lessons to be drawn from the 1996 Advisory Opinion of the Court?

The first lesson to be drawn is the recognition of the pertinence of the law of armed conflict (including humanitarian law), prohibiting the use of nuclear weapons.

This is a major point. The court has, in my view, fully recognized the applicability of the cardinal principles of international humanitarian law.

The second lesson to be drawn is the impertinence of taking so-called clean nuclear weapons into account. Speculation has been put forward that science has progressed to the point where there presently may exist intelligent nuclear weapons capable of discrimination and, in particular, able to strike combatants while sparing noncombatants.

If certain unique characteristics of a nuclear weapon should disappear through the effect of scientific progress, we would then be in the presence not of a nuclear weapon but of some entirely different weapons. The court, however, was asked to rule on the nuclear weapon; to rule on a weapon of an entirely different nature would have been beyond its mandate.

But, I have the impression that this idea of a possible "progress" which would make the nuclear weapon a "clean" bomb has not totally vanished from the discourse of the court, despite its repeated assertions.

The third lesson to be drawn is the unanimous recognition of the existence of a double obligation to negotiate and conclude the disarmament.

This is a new and critical point. The world has appreciated this important declaration of the court. It is a revolutionary pronouncement which, through the grace of its unanimity, has acquired legal value.

What does the future hold?

It is to the credit of the International Court of Justice that not only has it recalled to all the parties their good-faith duty to negotiate nuclear disarmament in accordance with Article VI of the NPT, but also went on to task them with a second, vigorous obligation--to "bring to a conclusion" these negotiations--which is nothing more nor less than actually to bring about concrete nuclear disarmament.

What is the meaning of this double obligation to negotiate and to bring to conclusion?

It is, first, the obligation to negotiate nuclear disarmament in good faith: an obligation to adopt a prescribed conduct.

And, second, an obligation to adopt a certain conduct to achieve a certain result: nuclear disarmament.

The future is not written in advance. We cannot penetrate the darkness of our fate. But everything urges us to consider that "nuclear weapon constitutes the accepted end of mankind." Mankind remains under the effect of a perverse and permanent nuclear blackmail. We must break free from it. Everyone has the responsibility to do his part in saving humanity.

There is a long way to go. And first of all, war is nothing but a failure of man, a defeat of his intelligence. Japan appears today like a holder of a strange and uncommon fate. It is the country of Fukushima that now knows the fusion, full of perils, of the heart of the nuclear power plant, which flows into the ocean, in spite of harsh norms of security enforced when that modern nuclear complex was constructed. Japan becomes the only country in the world to have been the victim of both military and civilian nuclear energy, having experienced the crazy danger of the atom, both in its military applications, destructive to life, and its beneficial civilian use, which has now turned into a nightmare with the serious incidents of Fukushima. That unique experience in the world suggests to one of your newspapers the following:

"Having suffered the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki as well as the Fukushima nuclear catastrophe, Japan has a duty and responsibility to appeal against the inhumane nature of nuclear weapons and work toward the elimination in earnest." (The Japan Times, March 18, 2015).

It is your honor to have always reminded humanity, which was tempted by the madness of nuclear war, of your terrifying ordeals. It is your honor to describe the mortal danger constituted by the diabolical power

of the destruction of the atom. It is your honor to place yourselves on the side of life, there where the death of man, that of nature, that of civilization searching for humanity which thinks it is the proud master of the atom, of the missile and of the gene. By your permanent appeals for the ban of the nuclear weapon, by your permanent appeals for reason, you have become the keepers and shepherds of planet Earth.

* * *

Mohammed Bedjaoui was the president of the International Court of Justice in 1996, when it issued an advisory opinion on the use or threat of nuclear weapons. He has also served as Algerian foreign minister as well as the Algerian ambassador to France and the United Nations.

Special class in A-bombed train

August 4, 2015

Class held on 'A-bombed train' to teach Hiroshima children importance of peace

<http://mainichi.jp/english/english/newsselect/news/20150804p2a00m0na018000c.html>

HIROSHIMA -- Elementary and junior high school children took a special class on peace on Aug. 4 on a streetcar called "hibaku densha" (A-bombed train) that was repaired after suffering damage from the 1945 atomic bombing.

In the classroom set up on the streetcar run by Hiroshima Electric Railway Co., Pak Nam-ju, an 82-year-old South Korean resident of Japan, gave an account of her own experience of the bombing. Pak said, "Looking at present-day Hiroshima, it's impossible to imagine the horrors of 70 years ago. That's why I want to convey my experience. I want you to know that the peace you have now is built on many sacrifices."

On Aug. 6, 1945, when Pak was a first-grade student at a wartime girls' school, she was hit by the atomic bombing about 1.8 kilometers away from ground zero. The train she was on was heavily damaged by the blast and pieces of glass from broken windowpanes got stuck in her head.

Pak started sharing her own experience of the bombing two years ago. She told 26 elementary and junior high school children in the special class, "People who had suffered burns moved their arms up and down like a bird and came down, shouting: 'Hot, hot.'" She then added, "An atomic bomb must never be used again."

The event to hear eyewitness accounts on the "hibaku densha" of the bombing of Hiroshima has been hosted by the Hiroshima Institution for Peace Education (HIPE), a group of school teachers. The latest one was the 27th of its kind.

Final thoughts

August 3, 2015

Atomic bomb survivors pass on final thoughts in survey

http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/social_affairs/AJ201508030055

THE ASAHI SHIMBUN

When the questionnaire about surviving the atomic bombing arrived at the home of Umeko Koyama in April, she was worried that her shaking hands would prevent her from writing sentences.

"But I can still answer the questions," she told her grandson's wife, Sayaka. "People around me are all dying off. I think there is something that I must pass on as a final act."

Umeko was one of 5,762 hibakusha (atomic bomb survivors) who responded to a survey from The Asahi Shimbun marking the 70th anniversary of the dropping of the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It enabled her and others to leave behind final messages for posterity.

Sayaka wrote in the answers for Umeko, who was then 87 and living in Keisen, Fukuoka Prefecture, to such questions as: "What was the most trying thing that happened to you?" and "Where did you find psychological support?"

The four-page questionnaire's final page had a large blank space for respondents to freely express their thoughts.

"You have to write the message by yourself," Sayaka said.

"You are right," Umeko replied, and she took back the questionnaire.

UMEKO'S STORY

On Aug. 6, 1945, Umeko was working as a nurse's apprentice at a Hiroshima hospital.

Because the hospital was located only about a kilometer from ground zero, many of her fellow workers died in the blast. The injured were brought in one after another. The bodies of the deceased were piled up in the nearby athletic ground and cremated. Later, those remains were put into envelopes and given to bereaved family members.

Umeko did not believe the reports that the war had ended, thinking it just a wild rumor.

After the war, she moved to Fukuoka and married. She had a daughter and eventually was blessed with two grandchildren.

However, her daughter, who lived with Umeko, developed ovarian cancer and died in summer 2014 when she was only 63.

Umeko blamed herself for her daughter's death, thinking she might have been responsible by surviving the bombing but passing the deadly effects of the radiation on to her child.

About a month after Umeko had Sayaka write in the answers to the questionnaire, Umeko died--on May 12 of a ruptured aneurysm.

After Umeko's funeral, Sayaka wondered what became of the questionnaire and whether Umeko had written the final message. Just then, a reporter from The Asahi Shimbun contacted the family and asked to meet with Umeko.

The questionnaire had been sent in by Umeko's son-in-law before her death. Umeko had filled almost the entire final blank page with her own handwriting. She wrote about what happened when the atomic bomb was dropped. She also wrote that she still found it difficult to eat grilled fish because it reminded her of the smell of the bodies being burned. She also wrote about losing her daughter to cancer.

She concluded the message with, "I want to live, to take good care of this life that did not die in the atomic bomb."

In speaking with an Asahi reporter, Sayaka said, "In the end, I am glad because her thoughts have been transmitted."

TAIKO'S TALE

Another hibakusha responded to the questionnaire while coming face-to-face with her own mortality. Taiko Kuriki was 8 and in the third grade of what was then an elementary school in Hiroshima when the atomic bomb struck.

A large flash of light streaked through the classroom where lessons had not yet begun. Glass shattered, and a friend was covered in blood caused by the flying shards. Taiko, in tears, returned home and in the backyard she saw her neighbor dying. The last scene was one that would haunt Taiko for the rest of her life.

Taiko eventually became a professor at a university in Tokyo and headed a department focusing on social welfare studies.

Living in Tokyo's Toshima Ward, she was determined to live on after the death of her husband. However, in 2007, when she was 70, and 62 years after Hiroshima was devastated by the bomb, Taiko was diagnosed with cancer of the large intestine.

Until then, Taiko had not applied for the hibakusha health card that would have allowed her to receive subsidies for health care from the central government. She found people who testified that she was eligible to receive the card because she was in Hiroshima when the atomic bomb was dropped.

However, the cancer metastasized. She had revealed to her daughter, Yumi Nakaganeku, 43, that she was terrified of dying.

Taiko received the questionnaire in March shortly before she fell into a coma.

Although her hands had swollen due to the side-effects from the cancer medicine she was taking, Taiko penciled in her replies.

"As the only nation to be hit by atomic bombs, (Japan) should stand at the forefront of the nuclear abolition movement. It is preposterous for Japan to become a nation that can wage war," she wrote.

"I have written this with the feeling of wanting to pass on the baton for a society without nuclear weapons to my children and grandchildren. My cancer is in the terminal stage," Taiko added.

Taiko died on May 2 at 78 after she had sent in the questionnaire.

"My mother wanted to pass on her thoughts by using what remained of her life," Yumi said. "And I want to pass on the words that my mother left behind."

Peace activists gather in Hiroshima

August 4, 2015

Hiroshima gears up for 70th A-bomb anniversary as peace campaigners gather

http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2015/08/04/national/history/hiroshima-gears-70th-bomb-anniversary-peace-campaigners-gather/#.VcDrU_nwmos

Kyodo

HIROSHIMA – The Hiroshima Municipal Government said it expects representatives from a record 100 countries to attend its annual ceremony Thursday to mark the U.S. atomic bombing as peace activists continued to gather in the city.

The participants will include U.S. Ambassador Caroline Kennedy, who will be attending the event for the second year in a row after assuming her post in late 2013, and a senior U.S. State Department official in charge of arms control, according to the U.S. government.

Peace campaigners from around the world gathered to attend annual conferences organized by major Japanese anti-nuclear groups to push for the elimination of nuclear weapons.

At a conference convened Tuesday by the Japan Council Against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs, known as Gensuikyo, 90-year-old atomic bomb survivor Sunao Tsuboi stressed the need to join forces to eliminate nuclear weapons, recalling his painful memories and physical suffering after experiencing the blast from about 1.2 km away.

"Illnesses caused by the atomic bomb continue to haunt me," said Tsuboi, one of the chairpersons of the Japan Confederation of A- and H-Bomb Sufferers Organizations.

He said he has been hospitalized a dozen times.

Muhammad Anshor, deputy permanent representative of Indonesia to the United Nations, said the horrific humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons witnessed in Hiroshima and Nagasaki is "one of the main driving forces" behind Indonesia's support for a total ban on nuclear weapons.

"I hope the governments and civil society continue to work together in striving for a world without nuclear weapons," he said.

Young peace activists from overseas also joined the event, with Mary Popeo, a 23-year-old from Boston, expressing her eagerness to take back her experiences in Japan to encourage young people to act.

"A lot of people tell me . . . that because we're young maybe you can't make as much difference, and people say, 'You have no experience of war,' or 'You're not an expert in nuclear weapons so why are you doing this?' But you do not need to be an expert in nuclear weapons to see the humanitarian consequences," she said.

Another conference was held Tuesday by the Japan Congress Against A- and H-Bombs, commonly known as Gensuikin.

Both Gensuikyo and Gensuikin will be holding anti-nuclear gatherings and other events in both Hiroshima and Nagasaki through Sunday.

Reviewing the NYT review

August 4, 2015

http://nf2045.blogspot.fr/2015/08/the-new-york-times-gloss-on-hiroshima.html?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Feed:+NuclearFreeBy2045+%28Nuclear+Free+by+2045?%29

The New York Times Gloss on Hiroshima and Nagasaki

Posted: 04 Aug 2015 11:44 PM PDT

Reviewing the review: Nagasaki: Life After Nuclear War, by Susan Southard reviewed by Ian Buruma in The New York Times, **July 28, 2015**

August 6th and 9th, 2015. Seventy years since the atomic bombs were dropped on Japan. The obvious things to say are being said elsewhere, so what follows is an analysis of some American coverage of the dreadful anniversary that has appeared so far.

As this anniversary rolls around each year, the question on everyone's mind, the aging elephant in the room, is whether an American president will ever visit the bombed cities and admit that, yes, maybe, possibly, WWII could have ended sometime around August 1945 without the atom bomb. And maybe the global existential dread of the following years could have been avoided if America hadn't scared Stalin into thinking the USSR was the next target. [1] But we may have to wait a long, long time for any words of contrition to be uttered by an American politician. Some officials may visit and go through the usual contortions to show sympathy and express hope that it may never happen again, but it is still impossible for American leaders to describe it as a war crime, or even as a strategic blunder that wasn't necessary to end the war with Japan. [2][3]

To get an idea of the present limits on American public discourse on this topic, it's interesting to note who gets to write about it in the perpetrator's paper of record, *The New York Times*, one week before the 70th anniversary. The *Times* could have told the story of its own reporter, William L. Laurence, who was on the payroll of both the *Times* and the Manhattan Project in the 1940s. He dutifully reported on all the information he had been privy to as soon as the bombs were dropped, then he passed on to the public the military's lies about the effects of radiation from the bomb blasts in New Mexico, Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Journalists and authors who uncovered this gross breach of journalistic ethics have called for *The New York Times* to apologize for its role as a state propaganda organ, and for Laurence's Pulitzer Prize to be revoked, but the issue has been studiously ignored by the *Times*. [4]

In the past two weeks leading up to August 6, 2015, the *Times* has run several articles about the 70th anniversary, but they have all been short on historical analysis and long on biographical sketches of survivors or scientists from the Manhattan Project. In the example discussed here, the honor of commemorating the occasion went to Ian Buruma, who in 2010 was ranked by the journal *Foreign Policy* as one of the "top 100 global thinkers." [5] He was described therein as a "classical liberal" in the political and economic sense of the term.

Included on the list were several members of the political and business establishment (Henry Kissinger, Bill Clinton, Madeleine Albright, Robert Gates, David Petraeus, Bill Gates, Sergey Brin, Larry Page, Steve Jobs, Jeff Bezos...) and intellectuals who can be generally described as those who downplay what Western civilization has done to the "developing world" yet hold up Western liberal democracy and economics as the beacon of hope for those who are yet to experience the benefits (Niall Ferguson, Ayaan Hirsi Ali, Steven Pinker, Malcolm Gladwell, Christopher Hitchens, Thomas Friedman, David Cameron...).

Conspicuously absent from the list are famous dissidents such as Noam Chomsky and Ralph Nader, as well as many others who are too far outside ideological boundaries to be included.

In the July 28th edition of *The New York Times*, Ian Buruma addressed the 70th anniversary of the atomic bombs by reviewing the non-fiction book *Nagasaki: Life After Nuclear War*. [6] He paid the obligatory respect to the victims and the peace movement, and he acknowledged the "barbarism" of the atomic bombings and the neglect of the victims during the censorship of the American occupation. The curious omission, however, was the avoidance of the one thing historians have become more certain of over the years: the bombs were not essential for bringing the war to a quick end.

More curious still is the way Buruma accuses the peace movement of being naively manipulated by both rightist and leftist politics. The atom bombs, defeat and the American occupation supplied both left and

right in Japan with anti-American grievances, so Buruma asserts, without any explanation, that the peace movement was manipulated by the extreme right, as well as the left.

The problem here is that Buruma confounds two competing views of Japanese history as being one thing called “the peace movement.” Most people who follow Japanese society think of the peace movement as leftist, against all forms of militarization, and very prone to denouncing Japan’s wartime atrocities. In contrast, the views of conservative political parties and right-wing groups are never associated with anything one would call a peace movement. The real peace movement has in fact fought constant battles to portray Japan’s wartime atrocities accurately in textbooks and museum exhibits.

Elsewhere in the review Buruma laments that monuments in Nagasaki Peace Park were donated by the likes of the Soviet Union, Poland, Cuba, the People’s Republic of China and East Germany, and then he drops in the completely irrelevant sentence, “Whether the world would have been a safer place on the terms of the Soviet Union and its satellites is less clear.” There is something strange about the placement of this statement here, and the implication that is attempted. First, was Nagasaki supposed to humbly accept these expressions of sympathy and shared hopes for a peaceful future, or was the city obliged to denounce the givers as insincere hypocrites? It’s not as if the “peace movement” was so politicized that monuments from the USA and other Western countries would have been refused because of their ideology or past deeds. For some strange reason (it’s so hard to imagine what it could be), their contributions are absent. Second, there is the inconvenient fact that the Eastern Bloc and China, for all their flaws, never used atom bombs in an act of war. That’s just something that the cheerleaders of capitalism and liberal democracies have to live with. Finally, it is ridiculous to imply that the acceptance of a few peace monuments meant that “the peace movement” was duped into supporting a world order based on “the terms of the Soviet Union.”

In a similar scaremongering slight directed at the peace movement, he added, “preaching world peace and expressing moral condemnation of nuclear bombs as an absolute evil are not a sufficient response to the dangers facing mankind.” He seems to suggest here that the citizens of Hiroshima and Nagasaki have to speak out on every other problem in the world before they should be taken seriously.

The dangers Buruma referred to were actually left unspecified, but it seems the point was made as a deflection to minimize responsibility for Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Supposedly, nuclear abolitionists are deluded if they are not fighting threats that lurk somewhere outside the influence of liberal democracies. One would normally think that the only other threat that comes close to the danger of nuclear war is ecological collapse, which is certain to come if current trends continue. But since this is a problem that has been created by the industrial revolution that rode along with classical liberalism, it goes unmentioned. It’s better to just refer vaguely to “dangers facing mankind.” By implication perhaps we are supposed to understand that this refers to the common euphemisms found in American discourse: “instability in the Middle East” or “saber-rattling” by Russia and China.

Finally, Buruma discusses Japan’s attitude toward its post-war liberal reforms. He refutes Southard’s claim that these were forced on Japan by an occupying nation, but again, the facts get in the way. Japan was an occupied nation and the new constitution was imposed in the absence of democratic representation. Most Japanese people may have liked the reforms, but it is an undeniable fact that they had no choice in the matter. Buruma wrote, “They didn’t have to be forced, for they cooperated quite willingly with the Americans who helped instigate them [the reforms].” But it depends on what you call “willing cooperation.” People tend to willingly cooperate in many circumstances where there are no alternatives. The fact remains that they were denied pride of ownership of these reforms because they had no voice in creating them.

What is more important here is that Buruma neglects the national pathology that arose from this lack of agency. It can't be remedied as long as Japan remains saddled with its American-supplied constitution, occupied by American military installations and subordinate to American policy. The right feels the nation has been emasculated, and the left suffers from the delusion that Japan has been a pacifist country during an era in which the occupation never really ended. Japan has hosted American military bases, and colluded in, supported and profited from American wars ever since the Korean conflict in the 1950s. The left, and the new generation of protesters decrying the recent re-interpretation of Article 9 (which forgoes the use of force as a way to settle international disputes) is upset that Japan is parting from its post-war tradition of pacifism, but they seem unaware of how complicit Japan has been in American wars. In one sense, it will be a good thing if Japanese soldiers are asked to join the next one. In that case, military cooperation with America might become less popular than it is now, and politicians will finally be held accountable for aiding and abetting American strategic goals.

For someone who is considered a leading intellectual and a Japan specialist, Buruma's discussion of Japanese history here is surprisingly facile and evasive. On the surface, the review is what passes these days as a compassionate think piece on one of the greatest atrocities of history, but on further reflection, it becomes apparent that the review actually serves up mostly backhanded compliments to the victims and the millions of people who have worked to eliminate nuclear weapons. This wouldn't be the case if he had not decided to use this opportunity to deflect blame onto his ideological opponents from a bygone era and to chastise the anti-nuclear movement for being "politicized" and naïve about unspecified "dangers facing mankind."

Notes

[1] Kate Brown, "The Great Soviet and American Plutonium Disasters," interviewed on *TalkingStickTV*, January 18, 2014. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O6Ys8ii6r_M As early as September 1945, Soviet spies had found American contingency plans for targeting Soviet cities with atomic bombs, and this shock came on top of the Soviets' bitter feelings of betrayal and abandonment by America, a wartime ally that suddenly seemed to want to take maximum advantage of the USSR's devastation in the post-war era. See also Kate Brown's book *Plutopia: Nuclear Families, Atomic Cities and the Great Soviet and American Plutonium Disasters*, pages 97-98.

[2] Roger Goodman (director), "Hiroshima: Why the Bomb was Dropped," *ABC News*, August 1995. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9-WnLNLe3sk> This documentary is an exceptional case in which a report produced for a mainstream American news channel gave comprehensive coverage of the decision to use the bomb. While leaving the question open for viewers to decide, the evidence presented strongly suggests that American motives were based on objectives beyond the war with Japan, which was sure to end soon thanks to the threat of Soviet involvement.

[3] William Burr (editor), "The Atomic Bomb and the End of World War II," *National Security Archive*, George Washington University, August 5, 2005, updated August 4, 2015. <http://nsarchive.gwu.edu/nukevault/ebb525-The-Atomic-Bomb-and-the-End-of-World-War-II/> This resource provides a wide range of primary sources that have been used by researchers to support their interpretations of the way America chose to end WWII.

[4] Amy Goodman and David Goodman, "Hiroshima Cover-up: How the War Department's Timesman Won a Pulitzer," *CommonDreams*, August 10, 2004.

<http://www.commondreams.org/views/2004/08/10/hiroshima-cover-how-war-departments-timesman-won-pulitzer>

[5] ahughey, "The FP Top 100 Global Thinkers," *Foreign Policy*, November 23, 2010.

<http://foreignpolicy.com/2010/11/23/the-fp-top-100-global-thinkers-5/>

[6] Ian Buruma, "'Nagasaki: Life After Nuclear War,' by Susan Southard," *The New York Times*, July 28, 2015. http://www.nytimes.com/2015/08/02/books/review/nagasaki-life-after-nuclear-war-by-susan-southard.html?_r=3&referrer=

"We are not thinking of transporting nuclear weapons"

August 5, 2015

Japan defense chief says SDF could deal with nukes under security bills

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2015/08/05/national/politics-diplomacy/japan-defense-chief-says-sdf-deal-nukes-security-bills/#.VcHzgfnwmos>

by Reiji Yoshida

Staff Writer

Under the ruling bloc's security bills, the Self-Defense Forces would theoretically be allowed to transport, repair or store nuclear, chemical and biological weapons for a foreign or multinational force, Defense Minister Gen Nakatani told the Upper House on Wednesday.

But his statement came with an important caveat.

In reality, Nakatani emphasized, Japan would never actually carry out such an operation because the United States, Japan's main military ally, would not ask Tokyo to do so, given the "unique nature" of nuclear weapons and Washington's policy of not forward-deploying nuclear weapons in the Pacific.

"It's true (that the bills) do not have any provisions to exclude particular items. However, the SDF would make an independent decision on what it would transport," Nakatani said.

"Japan has maintained the three nonnuclear principles (of not making, possessing or bringing nuclear weapons into the country). We are not thinking about transporting nuclear weapons," he said.

Still, Nakatani's remarks, made in response to a question from an opposition lawmaker, could create a stir and provide ammunition to Diet members who are against the security bills.

It could also further prolong difficult deliberations in the chamber on the legislation.

Kenzo Fujisue of the Democratic Party of Japan, the largest opposition force, noted that the three nonnuclear principles are not enshrined in law, and the security bills themselves do not include any of the assumptions explained by Nakatani during the session.

"There are no legal restrictions. Can we stop a runaway (government)? It should be restricted by law," Fujisue argued in the same Upper House session at the special committee on the security bills.

Under the legislation, the SDF would be allowed to provide logistic support to a foreign or multinational force engaging in a United Nations-authorized military mission, or to the U.S. military in the event that there was a situation that could lead to an armed attack against Japan if it wasn't confronted.

The bills would also allow the SDF to provide "ammunition" to such a foreign or multinational force, but not "weapons."

Japan isn't currently allowed to provide either ammunition or weapons because of war-renouncing Article 9 of the Constitution.

On Tuesday, Nakatani also caused a stir in front of the same committee. According to his definition, missiles are consumable "ammunition" and not "weapons." Thus under the bills, the SDF would theoretically be allowed to provide missiles to a foreign or multinational force.

According to Nakatani, powerful cluster bombs and depleted uranium shells are also "ammunition" because they are "consumable supplies."

During the same session, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said that cluster bombs and depleted uranium shells are not part of the SDF's weapons cache, thus it would be impossible to provide them to a multinational force.

Opposition lawmakers, however, have criticized the Abe government's apparent ambiguous definition of "ammunition."

The government has insisted the logistic support role is constitutional because it says a conceptual line can be drawn between SDF logistic support and "use of force" by the multinational force in question.

Article 9 of the Constitution stipulates that the Japanese people "forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as means of settling international disputes."

Opposition lawmakers have pointed out that logistics units always play a critical role in military operations and that it is impossible to separate "use of force" from potential logistics support by the SDF.

Security bills technically allow nuclear arms transport: minister

<http://mainichi.jp/english/english/newsselect/news/20150805p2g00m0dm085000c.html>

TOKYO (Kyodo) -- Government-proposed national security legislation would theoretically allow Japan to transport nuclear weapons in logistics support for foreign countries, Defense Minister Gen Nakatani said Wednesday.

During deliberations on the legislation in a House of Councillors panel session, Nakatani, however, immediately ruled out such a possibility citing the country's non-nuclear principles.

Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida also denied the possibility regardless of legal interpretation, telling the same panel, "Given Japan's policy and stance on nuclear weapons, Japanese would never transport nuclear weapons".

The three non-nuclear principles forbid Japan from possessing, manufacturing or allowing nuclear weapons on its territory.

Shinkun Haku, a lawmaker of the biggest opposition Democratic Party of Japan who questioned the ministers during the panel session, said the government should scrap the legislation which would pave the way for the SDF to carry nuclear arms, Haku said.

The security bills are aimed at expanding the role of the SDF abroad and strengthening Japan's security alliance with the United States.

Recent opinion polls indicate a majority of Japanese voters oppose the legislation, which opponents say would make it likelier for Japan to be involved in war.

Nakatani said enhancing the SDF's operations is more important than ever at a time China is stepping up its military assertiveness.

China's expanded maritime activity has become "a security concern for the region including Japan and for the international community," he said.

Hugh Cortazi: Hiroshima

August 5, 2015

Hiroshima after 70 years

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2015/08/05/commentary/japan-commentary/hiroshima-70-years/#.VcH4HPnwmot>

by Hugh Cortazzi

LONDON – I first visited Hiroshima one year after the atomic bomb. I shall never forget the devastation that I saw then, nor the horrors, which have been preserved in the Peace Memorial Museum.

I look back with sorrow and sympathy for all those who suffered in the air raids, which destroyed the cities and towns of Japan, especially in the fire bombing raids on Tokyo in March 1945 and in the atomic bomb attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Japanese, however, need to bear in mind that if the Nazis or the Japanese military had plumbed the secrets of creating a bomb they would not have hesitated to use such a terrible weapon against the Allies. They should also not forget that Japan's sufferings were largely preceded by saturation bombing of cities in China, not least against Chongqing in May 1939.

Nor can we Europeans fail to remember the horrors and casualties caused by the bombing of European cities. The Nazis attempted to destroy London in 1940 and 1941. The saturation bombing attack by German aircraft on Coventry in 1940 lasted 10 hours and destroyed the city center and the cathedral, causing numerous civilian casualties. The Nazis bombed indiscriminately other British cities and attempted to destroy the British economy and will to resist. Toward the end of the war in Europe they launched indiscriminate attacks on southern England by launching the V1 flying bombs and the V2 rockets, which were the first two of the secret weapons they were developing.

The British, the Americans and the Russians retaliated with devastating attacks on German cities. Hamburg, Berlin and Dresden were among the many German cities, which suffered appalling destruction and casualties. It is at least debatable whether the Allied bombing campaigns, despite all the loss of life entailed, shortened the war.

Ever since 1945 I have debated with myself and with others whether the use of the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki was justified. I am glad that the decision whether or not to use the bombs did not rest with me. I do not accept that the use of the bombs turned Japan from aggressor into victim. The victims were all those who suffered on both sides in the conflict.

By early 1945 it was clear to Konoe Fumimaro that Japan had no hope of winning the war. Yet it took his erstwhile colleagues eight months until they were forced by facts (one of which was the atom bomb) that Japan had lost a war, which many knew from the beginning was unwinnable.

These cowardly, stupid and criminally irresponsible people lacked the moral courage to admit the truth and take responsibility for defeat. Rather than accept the shame of failure they were prepared to see Japan and its civilization totally destroyed and sacrifice the lives of millions of Japanese people. They were indirectly at least responsible for the tragedies of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. To regard them as “sacrificial lambs” and enshrine them in Yasukuni Shrine is to insult the Japanese people and the “gods” whom some Japanese at least still revere.

Why did President Harry Truman decide to use the atomic bombs? Some of the reasons adduced such as that the developers of the bomb needed to know how it would work are unacceptable. But others are much more telling.

One was the existence of Japanese plans to massacre Allied prisoners of war if the Allies invaded Japan. After the way in which Allied prisoners had suffered at the hands of the Japanese military. e.g., in Southeast Asia and the Philippines, citizens in Allied countries would never have forgiven their leaders if they had the weapons to prevent a massacre and did not use them.

We must also remember the appalling loss of life involved in the assault on Okinawa. The Allied invasion of the Japanese mainland that was being planned would certainly have involved colossal Allied casualties as well as the almost certain devastation of Japan and the end of Japanese civilization. The Allied peoples wanted an end to war, destruction and ever more casualties.

Truman’s decision was not taken lightly. Who in the circumstances prevailing at the time can be certain that if they were in his shoes and knew what he did about the costs in human life of an invasion of Japan would have made a different decision? If the war had not ended in August 1945, many Japanese who went on to see the revival of Japan would not have survived.

Hugh Cortazzi served as Britain’s ambassador to Japan from 1980 to 1984.

Make peace prevail

August 5, 2015

Free the world of nuclear weapons

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2015/08/05/editorials/free-world-nuclear-weapons/#.VcH3yPnwmos>

The cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki mark the 70th anniversary of their atomic bombings today and three days later, respectively. On these days, people in Japan remember the suffering and agony of the victims of the only two nuclear attacks in history and pray for their souls and for peace. The anniversaries should also remind leaders and citizens of Japan and other nations of the need to renew their determination to make serious efforts to eliminate nuclear weapons as well as to make peace prevail around the world. It is important for leaders and citizens alike to remember that endeavors to abolish nuclear weapons cannot be separated from efforts to prevent war. For the seven decades after its defeat in World War II, Japan has tread a pacifist path under the war-renouncing Constitution.

Now the nation's security policy is at a crossroads, with the Abe administration touting a "proactive contribution to peace" that entails Japan taking on greater roles in international security affairs. The security legislation pending in the Diet would pave the way for Japan to engage in collective self-defense with its allies and significantly expand the scope of Self-Defense Forces' overseas missions. People should ponder what such developments would do to Japan's pacifist posture.

At 8:15 a.m. on Aug. 6, 1945, the B-29 Enola Gay of the U.S. Army Air Force, which flew from Tinian of the Mariana Islands in the western North Pacific Ocean, dropped the Little Boy enriched uranium bomb over Hiroshima. Three days later at 11:01 a.m., the B-29 Bockscar, also from Tinian, released the Fat Man plutonium bomb over Nagasaki. Tens of thousands of innocent civilians, from infants to the elderly, were killed, and the estimated death toll totaled some 140,000 in Hiroshima and about 74,000 in Nagasaki by the end of 1945. Among the victims were Koreans and Chinese, as well as American prisoners of war.

A nuclear bomb is not merely a "big bomb" that just causes physical destruction. Radiation from a nuclear weapon can damage DNA, thus causing cancer and hereditary effects. Many of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki survivors and their children suffer from ill health or fear of ill health even today. About 40 percent of the atomic bombing survivors now hospitalized at the Japanese Red Cross Nagasaki Genbaku (Atomic Bomb) Hospital — whose average age is 78.2 — suffer from cancer. As direct memories of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki experiences wane, the government should make detailed records of the damage caused by the atomic bombings to both people and to the cities themselves so the experiences can be passed on to future generations in Japan as well as the rest of the world.

The 70th anniversary of the atomic bombings come at a difficult time for the efforts to make the world free of nuclear arms. In May, a four-week United Nations conference to improve compliance with the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) ended without adopting a final document. Still, the humanitarian impact of nuclear arms was an important part of the discussions at the conference. The people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, who have a strong desire to see nuclear weapons eliminated, should work with interested citizens and groups in Japan and other countries to disseminate information worldwide about the dreadfulness of nuclear weapons to help accelerate moves to seek their ban.

Today's nuclear weapons are much more powerful and easier to deploy than those dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Given the current technological and political situation, the possibility of non-state actors such as a terrorist group acquiring nuclear arms cannot be ruled out. Some countries outside the NPT regime possess nuclear weapons. The nuclear weapons states and countries like Japan, which relies on the nuclear umbrella of its ally, are reluctant to create a global treaty to ban nuclear arms. They should take the current situation seriously and make bold efforts toward nuclear disarmament. Japan has played a leading role in adopting a U.N. resolution calling for a joint action for the abolishment of nuclear weapons. Accordingly, Japan should not hesitate to start making efforts to turn Northeast Asia into a nuclear weapons-free zone.

The United States was directly responsible for the Hiroshima and Nagasaki atomic bombings in 1945. But if Japanese leaders had decided earlier to accept the Potsdam Declaration to end the war, the U.S.

would not have atomic-bombed the two cities. Thus their responsibility was also grave. The nuclear attacks on the two cities occurred in the context of a war that Japan had started. Japan's anti-nuclear activists call nuclear weapons "absolute evil" in the sense that they should never be made, possessed and used. To make Japan's call for abolition of nuclear weapons more persuasive, it is indispensable for Japanese politicians and citizens to make clear Japan's responsibility for starting the war in the first place.

Eisenhower's misgivings about the bomb

August 5, 2015

Diary shows Eisenhower had misgivings about A-bomb attacks

http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2015/08/05/national/history/diary-shows-eisenhower-misgivings-bomb-attacks/#.VcH3U_nwmot

Kyodo

WASHINGTON – A diary kept by a U.S. official has shown that two months after the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945, Dwight Eisenhower, then an Army general, expressed misgivings about what had happened, a U.S. think tank said Tuesday.

It is already known that before the atomic bombings Eisenhower asked then President Harry Truman not to use nuclear arms, and the diary underlines that position. It was kept by an aide to U.S. Ambassador to the Soviet Union, Averell Harriman.

During a dinner meeting at his residence in a Frankfurt suburb with Harriman on Oct. 4, 1945, Eisenhower mentioned how he "had hoped that the war might have ended without our having to use the atomic bomb."

Eisenhower at that time was the Frankfurt-based military governor of the U.S. Occupied Zone. He succeeded Truman as U.S. president in 1953 and served two terms until 1961.

The National Security Archive, a think tank under the George Washington University in the U.S. capital, released Eisenhower's comment as part of a diary kept by Robert Miekjohn, an assistant to Harriman.

Hiroshima 2015

August 5, 2015

Hiroshima 70th A-bomb anniversary will draw officials from record 100 countries

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2015/08/05/national/history/hiroshima-gears-70th-bomb-anniversary-peace-campaigners-gather/#.VcH0qfnwmos>

Kyodo, JJI

HIROSHIMA – The Hiroshima Municipal Government said it expects representatives from a record 100 countries to attend its annual ceremony on Thursday to mark the U.S. atomic bombing, as peace activists gathered in the city.

The participants will include U.S. Ambassador Caroline Kennedy, who will be attending the event for the second year in a row after assuming her post in late 2013, and a senior U.S. State Department official in charge of arms control, according to the U.S. government.

Kennedy and Rose Gottemoeller, undersecretary of state for arms control and international security, will also attend a ceremony to be held on Sunday in Nagasaki, the other city devastated by a U.S. atomic bomb. It's the first time that a high-level Washington official will attend the two ceremonies, according to the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo.

The move comes amid growing calls in Japan for U.S. President Barack Obama to visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki to see the human consequences using nuclear weapons.

From the United Nations, Acting High Representative for Disarmament Affairs Kim Won-soo will attend the ceremony and read out a message from U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.

Diplomats in Japan from nuclear powers Britain, France and Russia, as well as the European Union will also attend the ceremony, according to the Hiroshima Municipal Government.

A memorial service was also held for Korean victims of the atomic bombing, at the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park on Wednesday morning.

In the 46th memorial service, hosted by the Hiroshima regional headquarters of the pro-Seoul Korean Residents Union in Japan, or Mindan, Chim Sung-ui, head of the Hiroshima branch, vowed to make an all-out effort toward denuclearization.

"We have advocated the elimination of nuclear weapons for 70 years and passed, as witnesses, memories of the atomic bombing to the younger generations with a sense of responsibility," Chim said.

At the ceremony, a list of 2,711 victims, including 22 who died within the last year, was placed in a monument. First-, second- and third-generation Korean female residents wearing traditional attire sang a requiem for the victims in front of some 200 participants, including bereaved families.

On Tuesday, peace campaigners from around the world gathered to attend annual conferences organized by major Japanese anti-nuclear groups to push for the elimination of nuclear weapons.

At a conference convened by the Japan Council Against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs, known as Gensuikyo, 90-year-old atomic bomb survivor Sunao Tsuboi stressed the need to join forces to eliminate nuclear weapons, recalling his painful memories and physical suffering after experiencing the blast from about 1.2 km away.

"Illnesses caused by the atomic bomb continue to haunt me," said Tsuboi, one of the chairpersons of the Japan Confederation of A- and H-Bomb Sufferers Organizations.

He said he has been hospitalized a dozen times.

Muhammad Anshor, deputy permanent representative of Indonesia to the United Nations, said the horrific impact of nuclear weapons witnessed in Hiroshima and Nagasaki is "one of the main driving forces" behind Indonesia's support for a total ban on nuclear weapons.

"I hope the governments and civil society continue to work together in striving for a world without nuclear weapons," he said.

Young peace activists from overseas also joined the event. Mary Popeo, a 23-year-old from Boston, expressed her eagerness to take back her experiences in Japan to encourage young people to act.

"A lot of people tell me . . . that because we're young maybe you can't make as much difference, and people say, 'You have no experience of war,' or 'You're not an expert in nuclear weapons so why are you doing this?' But you do not need to be an expert in nuclear weapons to see the humanitarian consequences," she said.

Another conference was held on Tuesday by the Japan Congress Against A- and H-Bombs, commonly known as Gensuikin.

Both Gensuikyo and Gensuikin will be holding anti-nuclear gatherings and other events in both Hiroshima and Nagasaki through Sunday.

Ban Ki-moon calls for nuclear-free world

August 5, 2015

U.N. secretary-general calls for nuclear free world on 70th anniversary of A-bombings



United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon speaks during a news conference following a Security Council meeting on Syria, on Wednesday, July 29, 2015, at U.N. headquarters. (AP Photo/Bebeto Matthews)

<http://mainichi.jp/english/english/newsselect/news/20150805p2a00m0na016000c.html>

NEW YORK -- On the occasion of the 70th anniversary this month of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon submitted an article to the Mainichi Shimbun.

The secretary-general wrote that "there remain serious disagreements" surrounding global nuclear disarmament, but also that "we owe it to the hibakusha (A-bomb survivors), all living beings and future generations to mark the 70th anniversary of the bombings and the founding of the United Nations by rededicating ourselves to realizing the vision of a nuclear-free world."

The full text is as follows:

As we mark the 70th anniversary of the nuclear attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, I am reminded of my visit to those cities five years ago. That moving experience was rendered even more meaningful by my meetings with hibakusha. The courage and fortitude of these brave survivors was deeply inspiring. I salute their seven decades of principled advocacy for a world free of nuclear weapons.

As the average age of the hibakusha has exceeded 80, I feel a greater sense of urgency to spread their message of peace, which has reverberated from the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki to every corner of the world.

Thanks in part to their tireless and outspoken activism, we have achieved great unanimity behind the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. This would have obvious benefits for all countries and peoples -- but despite the clear imperative of nuclear disarmament, there remain serious disagreements about how to achieve it.

That is why I am calling on leaders to stop squandering precious resources on destabilizing weapons and instead embrace a bold and global vision that meets the demands of humanity. I challenge anyone who doubts the urgency of nuclear disarmament to listen to the stories of the hibakusha. No one could look into the eyes of these brave and resilient individuals and claim to know better what nuclear weapons bring.

There is no more fitting occasion to remember the human consequences of nuclear weapons than this solemn 70th anniversary of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

It is also an opportunity to take concrete actions to rid the world of these most destructive weapons. I have long proposed that all parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), particularly the nuclear-weapon-states, fulfil their obligation to undertake negotiations on effective measures leading to nuclear disarmament. They could pursue this goal by agreement on a framework of separate, mutually reinforcing instruments -- or consider negotiating a nuclear-weapons convention backed by a strong system of verification.

I have also consistently advocated universal ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty, which bans all nuclear tests, constrains the development and proliferation of nuclear weapons, and contributes to progress on nuclear disarmament while helping to protect our environment against the harmful radioactive by-products of nuclear tests.

As an international community, we should seize this moment in history to bridge our divides, find common ground and achieve real progress on disarmament.

We owe it to the hibakusha, all living beings and future generations to mark the 70th anniversary of the bombings and the founding of the United Nations by re-dedicating ourselves to realizing the vision of a nuclear weapon free world.

Persisting in their pro-nuclear arms opinion

August 6, 2015

Atomic bombing has not stifled talk by politicians about arming Japan with nuclear weapons

http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/politics/AJ201508060003



Yasuhiro Nakasone, far left, then secretary-general of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party, attends a party meeting in April 1975 to discuss signing the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. Other participants from far right are: Kiichi Miyazawa, then foreign minister, Raizo Matsuno, LDP policy chief, and Hirokichi Nadao, chairman of the LDP General Council. (Asahi Shimbun file photo)

August 06, 2015

THE ASAHI SHIMBUN

August in Japan is always a solemn month as Hiroshima and Nagasaki hold ceremonies to remember the tens of thousands of people who perished in the 1945 atomic bombings.

Peace declarations read by the mayors of the two cities invariably call for greater efforts to rid the world of nuclear weapons.

That sentiment is shared by the vast majority of ordinary Japanese, which is at sharp odds with moves by some Japanese politicians to arm Japan with nuclear weapons.

A small cadre of government officials has persisted in focusing on the strategic connotations associated with having a nuclear arsenal.

In 1969, the Foreign Ministry compiled a confidential document about diplomatic policy which said:

"While the policy will be taken of not possessing nuclear weapons for the time being, Japan should always maintain the economic and technological potential to manufacture nuclear weapons. In addition, consideration should also be given so that no interference arises from other nations against such a move."

In 1970, the hawkish Yasuhiro Nakasone was director-general of what was then the Defense Agency. He would later become prime minister. As head of the Defense Agency, Nakasone ordered an assessment of the ramifications of Japan possessing nuclear arms.

One outcome was that nuclear weapons could be constructed within five years at a cost of 200 billion yen (\$1.6 billion). However, the report concluded that Japan could not arm itself with nuclear weapons because its relatively small land area deprived it of space for a nuclear testing site.

Between 1975 and 1976, debate in Japan centered on whether it should sign the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, which bans nations outside of the five nuclear powers from possessing nuclear weapons.

Some members of the entrenched Liberal Democratic Party resisted the move to make a pledge to the international community to never possess nuclear weapons.

One lawmaker boldly stated that "Japan should always maintain a free hand that leaves open the option of arming itself with nuclear weapons."

Another lawmaker wanted to know whether "Japan (can) continue to depend on the deterrence covered by the U.S. nuclear umbrella?"

Among the LDP hard-liners was the late Minoru Genda. During World War II, he was an officer in the Imperial Japanese Navy involved in planning for the Dec. 7, 1941, attack on Pearl Harbor in Hawaii. After the war, he served as chief of staff of the Air Self-Defense Force and later became an Upper House member.

According to several sources, lobbying of LDP lawmakers was done by those who represented the vested interests of government and business circles. The lawmakers were told that the best path for Japan was to have the potential to develop nuclear weapons.

By that time, Nakasone had moved up to the second most important party post of LDP secretary-general. But he was quickly convinced by a policy adviser that Japan had to sign the NPT or it would not be able to operate a nuclear fuel reprocessing facility at Tokaimura, Ibaraki Prefecture.

The reprocessing produces plutonium that can be reused as fuel for nuclear power plants, but also can be converted into materials to manufacture nuclear weapons.

The importance of such a facility was highlighted in more recent years by Shigeru Ishiba.

In autumn 2011, when he was serving as policy chief of the LDP, Ishiba gave an interview to Sapio, a monthly magazine published by Shogakukan Inc., in which he said, "Maintaining nuclear power plants will serve as a 'latent nuclear deterrent' by which we would be able to manufacture nuclear weapons within a specific time frame, if we chose to do so."

Other experts, however, were aghast at even the mention of a latent deterrent.

Tatsujiro Suzuki serves as director of Nagasaki University's Research Center for Nuclear Weapons Abolition. He previously held the post of vice chairman of the Japan Atomic Energy Commission.

"It is dangerous to use a latent deterrent as a diplomatic card," said Suzuki, 64. "That is especially so when considering the recent heightening of tensions within the security environment of Northeast Asia."

This summer, some participants at an international seminar held in Japan that brought together nuclear engineers were shocked when they were asked, "Would you obey an order to manufacture nuclear weapons?"

Several Japanese replied "Yes," without hesitation.

That was in sharp contrast to some foreign participants who said that as the only nation to have experienced atomic destruction, Japan had a responsibility to not produce nuclear weapons.

"With the aging of the hibakusha, there has also arisen a weakening of the understanding about nuclear weapons," Suzuki said.

Japan now possesses about 48 tons of plutonium. While not of the highest purity, that is still enough to create 6,000 or so nuclear warheads.

By continuing to shelter under the U.S. nuclear umbrella, Japan has incurred pithy retorts from the Russian ambassador to Japan.

As recently as April 2015, Russian envoy Evgeny Afanasiev sent faxes to the municipal governments in Hiroshima and Nagasaki brushing off criticism directed at Russian President Vladimir Putin for saying he had been ready to deploy nuclear weapons during the Crimean crisis in 2014.

Afanasiev also offered an ironic twist directed at Japanese policy when he further wrote, "It is also well-known whose 'nuclear umbrella' Japan has (been) relying on."

And therein lies the dilemma facing Japan as it tries to take a leadership position in the global move to abolish nuclear weapons even while it continues to rely on the U.S. nuclear arsenal for its security needs.

Masao Tomonaga, 72, felt keenly aware of critical foreign views when he attended a forum on the sidelines of the NPT review conference held in New York from April until May. Tomonaga, a hibakusha, is also the honorary head of the Japanese Red Cross Nagasaki Genbaku Hospital.

The citizens group that Tomonaga heads organized the forum. One American participant asked why Japan continued to rely on nuclear weapons even as it calls for nuclear weapons abolition. Having served as a member of the Japanese government delegation at other international conferences, Tomonaga knows full well the frustrations of defending official policy when leadership on the issue seems so lukewarm.

"We have to abolish nuclear weapons," Tomonaga said. "At the same time, it is only natural for Japan to be part of the U.S. nuclear umbrella due to fears about China's nuclear weapons. The Japanese people have had to hold such conflicting feelings at the same time. That makes it difficult to foresee what next step can be taken."

(This article was written by Akira Nakano and Hiroyuki Takei.)

Hiroshima destruction

check the Asahi for the pictures

Asahi website shows 360-degree view of Hiroshima A-bomb destruction

http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/social_affairs/AJ201508060064

August 06, 2015

By GEN OKAMOTO/ Staff Writer

HIROSHIMA--A striking panoramic view of the devastation in Hiroshima taken four days after the city's Aug. 6, 1945, atomic bombing can now be accessed on The Asahi Shimbun website.

The images were captured by Hajime Miyatake, a photographer working at Asahi's Osaka photo department who visited Hiroshima to record the destruction from the world's first use of an atomic weapon.

The Asahi Shimbun scanned Miyatake's negatives with a high-definition scanner and digitally restored the photos by removing stains and repairing damage to reproduce a 360-degree view of the city by combining 11 photographs.

The photos were taken Aug. 10 from the rooftop of a three-story police station in Shimoyanagi-cho (present-day Kanayama-cho, Naka Ward). Miyatake arrived in Hiroshima the previous day. Miyatake's photos will be donated to the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum, which is currently under renovation and is expected to reopen in spring 2018.

The panoramic view can be seen on a special Asahi Shimbun Web page about the atomic bombings that features many photos snapped immediately after the U.S. attack. Visit the website at (http://www.asahi.com/special/nuclear_peace/).

Hiroshima Mayor, Shinzo Abe

Hiroshima mayor, Abe call for abolition of nuclear weapons on 70th anniversary of A-bomb

http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/social_affairs/AJ201508060057

August 06, 2015

By GEN OKAMOTO/ Staff Writer

HIROSHIMA--Referring to nuclear weapons as the "ultimate inhumanity," Hiroshima Mayor Kazumi Matsui called on the nations of the world to create a security structure that does not rely on military force. Matsui read this year's Peace Declaration at a ceremony on Aug. 6 at Peace Memorial Park marking the 70th anniversary of the dropping of the world's first atomic bomb on Hiroshima.

He also pledged to make greater efforts to transmit the facts of the atomic bombing to future generations in light of the aging of the hibakusha, who survived the atomic bomb, and the decreasing number of individuals who can provide a first-hand account of the events of Aug. 6, 1945.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe also spoke at the ceremony and said, "We will make further efforts toward realization of a world without nuclear weapons."

He also pledged to submit a draft declaration at this autumn's U.N. General Assembly calling for the abolition of nuclear weapons.

However, unlike his speeches in 2013 and 2014, **Abe did not refer to maintaining the three non-nuclear principles of not manufacturing or possessing nuclear weapons as well as not allowing such weapons to enter Japan.**

According to Hiroshima municipal government officials, about 55,000 people attended the ceremony, including hibakusha and bereaved family members. Hibakusha and surviving family members living abroad, such as in South Korea, also attended this year's ceremony, the first time they did so in a decade. U.S. Ambassador Caroline Kennedy attended for the second consecutive year, along with Rose Gottemoeller, the first U.S. under secretary of state to attend the ceremony. Gottemoeller is in charge of arms control and international security. Ambassadors from Britain, France and Russia attended, but the Chinese ambassador did not.

A record 100 nations were represented at the ceremony.

A total of 5,359 hibakusha were confirmed to have died over the past year. Matsui and representatives of bereaved family members placed a roster with the names of those hibakusha into the memorial cenotaph. Abe and other participants also laid wreaths before the cenotaph. A moment of silence was observed at 8:15 a.m. when the Peace Bell was rung to mark the time the bomb detonated over the city.

Defense minister gets in trouble

Defense minister triggers uproar with comments on nuclear weapons under security legislation

http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/politics/AJ201508060062

August 06, 2015

By SACHIKO MIWA/ Staff Writer

Japan's Self-Defense Forces can theoretically provide nuclear weapons for other countries under security legislation now before the Diet, Defense Minister Gen Nakatani said Aug. 5.

However, he added, "As our country does not possess nuclear weapons, we cannot provide them. It could never happen."

The minister explained that nuclear weapons are classified as "danyaku" (ammunition). He was attending an Upper House special committee on the security legislation and made the comments after being asked whether the SDF can offer nuclear weapons to the armed forces of other countries.

Among several bills that constitute the security legislation package, the "serious influence situations bill" and the "international peace support bill" state that the SDF cannot provide "buki" (arms) but can offer danyaku.

Nakatani was also asked whether the security legislation imposes any limits on goods that can be transported by the SDF as rear-echelon support activities.

One questioner asked whether it was possible for the SDF to transport nuclear weapons, chemical weapons and poison gas, to which Nakatani replied, "Legally, (the possibility) is not ruled out (under the security legislation)."

With regard to refueling, which also falls under rear-echelon support activities, Nakatani said, "Legally, there are no stipulations to rule out the possibility (of the SDF refueling fighter jets loaded with nuclear weapons or nuclear-powered submarines). It is possible to refuel them if the places of the refueling are in areas where armed combat is not raging."

Nakatani went on to state: "Our country has the 'three nonnuclear principles' (of not possessing or producing nuclear weapons or introducing them into Japan). So with nuclear (weapons), we have no options of ever having to transport them or refuel fighter jets (armed with nuclear weapons) or submarines (operated with nuclear power)."

Even though Nakatani was at pains to defuse an uproar by stating Japan's firm policy, the secretary-general of the main opposition Democratic Party of Japan blasted his remarks.

Yukio Edano pointed out that a new administration could easily take a different view.

In short, **Edano said Nakatani's explanations did not serve as a brake.**

"Even if the Abe administration says, 'Our country has the three nonnuclear principles,' it does not have persuasive power," Edano said. "What is questioned is what the SDF will become able to do under the security legislation."

A-bomb survivors beg Abe to reconsider

Atomic bomb survivors implore Abe to withdraw unpopular security bills

http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/politics/AJ201508060050

August 06, 2015

By TAKASHI OKUMA/ Staff Writer

HIROSHIMA--Survivors of the atomic bombing here pleaded with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe to drop the new security legislation following a ceremony marking the 70th anniversary of the devastation of the city. "It is a clear violation of the Constitution, and a majority of Japanese either oppose it or hold doubts about it," they told Abe.

Every year, representatives of hibakusha (atomic bomb survivors) meet with the prime minister after his attendance at the memorial ceremony held at Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park.

This year, the representatives of seven hibakusha groups asked Abe to retract the security bills now being deliberated in the Upper House. If the legislation becomes law, it will greatly expand the role of the Self-Defense Forces overseas.

The representatives also handed Abe a document detailing their requests, including the one to retract the bills.

"Some of the measures being pushed by the government go against the wishes of the hibakusha, and we cannot but hold fears and doubts. The best example is the security legislation," the document said.

Abe replied, "(The security legislation) will send the message that the Japan-U.S. security alliance will function in a complete manner, and that will prevent conflicts from occurring."

It was the second straight year that the hibakusha groups have asked the prime minister to rescind a major policy initiative.

Last year, the representatives of the seven groups called on Abe to retract the Cabinet decision made in July 2014 to change the government interpretation of the Constitution and lift the self-imposed ban on the exercise of the right to collective self-defense.

Japan should play central role to push nuclear disarmament

August 6, 2015

EDITORIAL: Japan should lead global campaign to convince nuclear powers to disarm

<http://ajw.asahi.com/article/views/editorial/AJ201508060068>

August 06, 2015

If it is not raining in Hiroshima tonight and the game goes ahead, all players of Hiroshima Toyo Carp professional baseball club will wear a red number 86 on their jerseys as they play a home game at the Mazda Zoom-Zoom Stadium Hiroshima.

This will be the first time that all players of a Central League team have worn the same uniform number in an official game. This is an event called "Peace Nighter" (night game), designed to remind or inform people of the fact that Hiroshima was devastated by atomic bombing 70 years ago to the day--Aug. 6, hence the number 86.

The mother and the grandmother of Hajime Matsuda, the owner the Carp, are "hibakusha," survivors of the atomic bombing of the city.

What prompted Matsuda, 64, to organize this event as part of the club's efforts to send out messages concerning peace and Hiroshima's tragedy is a blog posting by a key player of the team. The player, who hails from the northern Tohoku region, said he had not known about "Aug. 6" until his marriage with a woman born in Hiroshima after joining the Carp.

Matsuda himself designed a special cap for the day, which features an image of a white dove on the team color of red, as well as a special emblem sewn on the sleeve of the jersey showing the figure 297,684, the number of people exposed to radiation from the A-bomb who have died as of Aug. 5 this year.

The idea that all players don number 86 on the day was conceived by Masaharu Jo, chief of program scheduling and development at local broadcaster RCC Broadcasting Co.

Four years ago, when he was working for the news section, Jo found that the ratio of children who knew the A-bomb was dropped on Hiroshima at 8:15 a.m. on Aug. 6, 1945, had declined significantly. According to a survey by the Hiroshima municipal board of education, only 33 percent of elementary school students and 56 percent of junior high school students knew the fact, down from 56 percent and 75 percent, respectively, 15 years earlier.

"I was shocked to find sharp falls in the ratios," says Jo. "I thought the figures for other parts of Japan must be much lower than those for Hiroshima, where there is much enthusiasm about peace education and reporting on topics related to the atomic bombing.

"I wondered whether there were ways this ballpark can help send out at least basic information (about the atomic bombing) to people in both Japan and the rest of the world," says Jo.

DOOMSDAY CLOCK AT 3 MINUTES TO MIDNIGHT

No nuclear weapons have been used in a war during the 70 years since the dropping of the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. When the Cold War ended, the fear of a nuclear war faded in people's minds. But there still exist a sufficient number of nuclear weapons to kill all the people on this planet, with many of the warheads in a dangerous state of war readiness.

The situation concerning nuclear arms has deteriorated in recent years. Nations such as Pakistan, India and North Korea have carried out nuclear arms tests, while Russia has been engaged in nuclear-weapon saber rattling.

Two years after the nuclear attacks on the two Japanese cities, a U.S. science magazine started showing the so-called Doomsday Clock, a symbolic clock face indicating the time left until midnight, which represents the time of nuclear catastrophe.

In January this year, the clock was put forward, for the first time in three years, by two minutes to three minutes before midnight.

The clock was set backward to 17 minutes before midnight after the end of the Cold War. But the clock is now closer to the doomsday mark than at any time in the past except for 1953, when the clock was set to two minutes before midnight in the wake of hydrogen bomb tests by the United States and the Soviet Union.

Although the latest decision to put the clock forward also reflects the dangers posed by the effects of other human activities, such as global warming, it is nevertheless a strong warning about the moves by the United States and Russia to modernize their nuclear arsenals amid their intensifying enmity.

The 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which was held in New York from April 27 to May 22, ended without a final document being adopted. The discussion was marked by a bitter confrontation between the nuclear powers that are unwilling to part with their powerful weapons and the nonnuclear countries that are increasingly concerned about that stance.

RECOGNIZE NUCLEAR WEAPONS AS AN 'ABSOLUTE EVIL'

In the past several years, there has been a rapidly growing chorus of calls among nonnuclear states for an international treaty to ban nuclear arms altogether. A lack of significant progress in the efforts for nuclear arms reduction has made these countries increasingly concerned about a situation where their fates rest in the hands of nuclear powers.

In response to a request from the U.N. General Assembly for an advisory opinion on the legality of nuclear weapons, the International Court of Justice in 1996 replied that "the threat or use of nuclear weapons would generally be contrary to the rules of international law applicable in armed conflict, and in particular the principles and rules of humanitarian law."

In delivering a keynote speech for a symposium held in Hiroshima last month, Mohammed Bedjaoui, the presiding judge of the court when it handed down the advisory opinion, who later served as Algeria's foreign minister, described nuclear arms as the "weapon of the devil."

He also pointed out that in three international conferences on the inhumane nature of nuclear weapons the majority of states supported the "humanitarian approach" to nuclear disarmament, which is aimed at establishing international standards that define nuclear arms as inhumane weapons as well as a treaty to ban the possession and use of these weapons of mass destruction.

It is a big challenge to figure out how to persuade the nuclear powers, which turn their backs on the argument that nuclear weapons are by nature inhumane, to discard their nuclear arsenals to reach the goal of complete abolition of nuclear arms. But it is clearly time to start taking actions.

GLOBAL CAMPAIGN JAPAN'S RESPONSIBILITY

The question should not be whether nuclear weapons are strategically useful or not, according to Nobuo Hayashi, senior legal adviser for the International Law and Policy Institute in Oslo.

"As the mayors of Hiroshima and other people have repeatedly asserted in their speeches, nuclear weapons are an 'absolute evil,'" he says. "The idea of nuclear deterrence holds hostage not only the peoples of the countries possessing nuclear weapons but also the peoples of third countries."

Bedjaoui visited Hiroshima for the first time to attend the symposium. Even though he had read literary works about the atomic bombing, actually paying a visit to the city was a completely different and incomparable experience, he says.

The number of foreign visitors to the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum is growing.

In the NPT review conference, the Japanese government urged political leaders, diplomats and young people of the world to visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The government should follow up with concrete actions like making it a rule to suggest visits to these cities to all foreign dignitaries who come to Japan. A large-scale campaign to popularize the notion that nuclear weapons are inhumane in nature would certainly enhance international calls for the abolition of nuclear arms, according to Steven Leeper, an American who was involved in Hiroshima's administrative efforts to promote peace and served as chairman of the Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation.

The 2020 Tokyo Olympics may offer a good opportunity for such a campaign, he says.

The dates of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Aug. 6 and Aug. 9, should be remembered by all Japanese.

It is the responsibility of Japan as the nation that suffered nuclear attacks to make serious efforts to recognize and understand more deeply the inhumane nature of atomic bombs and promote that recognition and understanding internationally.

--The Asahi Shimbun, Aug. 6

Editorial: Japan should play central role in push for global nuclear disarmament

<http://mainichi.jp/english/english/perspectives/news/20150806p2a00m0na014000c.html>

Kazu Sueishi, 88, who was born in the United States and raised in Hiroshima, saw a white dot in the blue sky over Hiroshima 70 years ago immediately after a B29 bomber flew away. She was about to say to a person nearby, "What's that?" when she saw a flash. The white dot later turned out to be an atomic bomb. Three days later, another atomic bomb was dropped on Nagasaki.

Sueishi survived but was bedridden for about seven months after the bombing. She suffered a broken hip and could not stop bleeding from her gums. She also felt like she was choking and had the chills. Every morning, she thought, "Today is my turn to die."

Sueishi miraculously recovered and traveled to Los Angeles in 1957 to marry a second-generation Japanese-American man. At the time, treatment she underwent for illnesses related to her exposure to radiation were not covered by medical insurance in the U.S. Some legislators in the U.S. even said taxpayers' money should not be used to treat people from a former enemy. Her husband Masayuki experienced being detained by the United States because he was of Japanese descent.

Nevertheless, Sueishi has never had a grudge against the United States. She has talked about her experience of the atomic bombing to American people while serving as president of the American Society of Hiroshima-Nagasaki A-Bomb Survivors.

"Some people earnestly listen to what I have to say and tell me, 'We're sorry. Forgive us.' If you talk to Americans, they understand you. Mr. Obama calls for a world without nuclear weapons but his calls have hardly spread. I have no choice but to talk about my experiences with love even though people may soon forget my speech," says Sueishi.

However, we live in a harsh world. Talks between the United States and Russia on nuclear arms reductions have been deadlocked and President Vladimir Putin, who forcibly annexed Crimea into Russia, even threatened to use nuclear weapons and provoke other countries as if to say they should counter Russia with weapons. It has been reported that China, Pakistan and India are drastically expanding their nuclear armament.

North Korea is also believed to be developing nuclear missiles that can hit the United States. A domino effect of the nuclear arms race appears to be happening across the world. A U.S. think tank predicts that North Korea will have deployed 100 nuclear missiles by 2020, posing a direct threat to Japan.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is hollowing out. India and Pakistan have refused to sign the treaty while North Korea declared its withdrawal from the pact in 2003. Six countries including the United States and European countries have put the brakes on Iran's nuclear weapons development to a certain extent. Still, nuclear weapons believed to be held by Israel, which has also refused to sign the NPT, is a destabilizing factor in the Middle East.

Furthermore, the latest NPT Review Conference held this past May ended without adopting a final document, demonstrating that a perception gap between six nuclear powers and other countries has widened to an unprecedented level.

China blocked Japan from incorporating calls on world leaders to visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki in the final document and attempted to link the issue to historical perceptions. While China acted in a high-handed manner, the move shed light on the failure of Japan's behind-the-scenes efforts to sufficiently form a consensus among parties on the matter.

This is the reality of nuclear disarmament after 70 years have passed since the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. One cannot help but wonder whether Japan's calls for nuclear disarmament are sufficiently heard throughout the world and whether the position of Japan, which relies on the U.S. nuclear umbrella while calling itself the only country that experienced atomic bombing, is understood by other countries. Questions also persist as to what Japan should do to prevent the endless nuclear proliferation and nuclear arms race from devastating the world.

To answer these questions, Japan should more seriously and proactively work on nuclear disarmament. From the viewpoint of nuclear deterrence, it is not necessarily wrong for Japan to rely on the U.S. nuclear umbrella to avoid a third atomic bombing. Still, it would be out of the question if Japan were to hesitate to make its assertions on nuclear disarmament to show consideration to U.S. nuclear policy. Rather, Tokyo should seriously consider trying to persuade Washington to reduce its nuclear arms and play a leading role in the international community over nuclear disarmament.

It is good news that not only the U.S. ambassador to Japan but also another high-ranking official of the U.S. government is attending ceremonies to mark the atomic bombing anniversary. However, U.S. President Barack Obama should offer prayers to those who fell victim to the atomic bombing if he wants to stick to his goal of achieving a world without nuclear weapons. The president should take the opportunity of next year's G7 summit meeting in Japan to visit the atomic-bombed cities. If a U.S. president is to overcome the perception gap between the two countries over the atomic bombing and visit these cities, it could give momentum to nuclear arms reductions and nuclear disarmament that remain deadlocked.

The average age of atomic bombing survivors, or hibakusha, has surpassed 80. People's memory of the atomic bombings is fading as 70 years have passed since the attacks. Hitomi Shirabe, 53, leader of the citizens group Peace Baton Nagasaki, is involved in activities to hand over hibakusha's experiences to future generations. She is now wondering how to convince the world of the need to get rid of nuclear arms after all hibakusha have passed away.

Shirabe says her group struggles to pass the story of the atomic bombings to younger generations. "A growing number of people -- not only younger generations but also older ones -- are reluctant to listen to vivid and horrific stories on the atomic bombings. Therefore, we include scientific information and specific experiences of hibakusha in our stories to stimulate our listeners' intellectual curiosity and help them acquire basic knowledge. We sometimes use picture-story shows when we think our words are insufficient to convey hibakusha's stories," she explains.

Just telling people about the tragic reality is not necessary appropriate. The fact that dolls that show the devastation caused by the atomic bombing are no longer on permanent display at the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum apparently reflects such trends of the times. How to hand over hibakusha's experiences to future generations is a major challenge that Japan, the only atomic-bombed country, must face.

We, children of Hiroshima

August 6, 2015

Hiroshima: Commitment to Peace by Children

<http://mainichi.jp/english/english/newsselect/news/20150806p2a00m0na002000c.html>

HIROSHIMA -- August 6, 2015

On August 20 last year, we lost one of our fellow students in a disastrous landslide. We came to know the grief that comes from suddenly losing a friend we took for granted.

8:15 a.m., August 6, 1945. Under the blazing sun, a single atomic bomb stole away buildings, nature, and countless precious lives. Though we didn't experience what happened that day, we can now better imagine the despair that comes with losing loved ones.

Seventy years have passed. Now, Hiroshima is a beautiful city with lush greenery and colorful, blooming flowers where we can all smile and be happy.

In this city we feel the desire for peace. All around us are things that bring peace to mind: the many paper cranes we see in Peace Memorial Park; The A-bomb damage we see in the Peace Memorial Museum; The hibakusha stories, with their sorrow, agony, and powerful desire for peace; And this Commitment to Peace, which we, Children's Representatives, now read aloud.

Our grandparents survived the bombing and lived on these past 70 years in Hiroshima, passing life on to us.

Accepting this legacy of life and love of peace, we think about what we can do and work to create "everyday peace." Won't you, too, think more about peace with close friends, people of different generations, and people who live in other countries and regions?

We, children of Hiroshima,

Vow one by one

To connect the truth,

The hopes and desires of the hibakusha,

And our own desire for peace.

From the past and present

To the future.

Children's Representatives: Yuro Kuwahara (6th grade, Hiroshima City Hakushima Elementary School), Yuka Hosokawa (6th grade, Hiroshima City Yano-minami Elementary School)

August 06, 2015 (Mainichi Japan)

"Atomic weapons and the human race cannot coexist"

National : Plea for nuclear weapons-free world shines on Hiroshima river

<http://mainichi.jp/graph/2015/08/06/20150806p2a00m0na019000c/001.html>

2015 年 08 月 06 日



Hiroshima's Atomic Bomb Dome is reflected in the Motoyasu River along with a message of peace projected onto the water on the night of Aug. 5, 2015. The text reads: "Atomic weapons and the human race cannot coexist." (Mainichi)

Peace Declaration by City of Hiroshima

August 6, 2015

The City of Hiroshima Peace Declaration

<http://mainichi.jp/english/english/newsselect/news/20150806p2a00m0na001000c.html>

HIROSHIMA -- August 6, 2015

In our town, we had the warmth of family life, the deep human bonds of community, festivals heralding each season, traditional culture and buildings passed down through history, as well as riversides where children played. At 8:15 a.m., August 6, 1945, all of that was destroyed by a single atomic bomb. Below the mushroom cloud, a charred mother and child embraced, countless corpses floated in rivers, and buildings burned to the ground. Tens of thousands were burned in those flames. By year's end, 140,000 irreplaceable lives had been taken, that number including Koreans, Chinese, Southeast Asians, and American prisoners of war.

Those who managed to survive, their lives grotesquely distorted, were left to suffer serious physical and emotional aftereffects compounded by discrimination and prejudice. Children stole or fought routinely to survive. A young boy rendered an A-bomb orphan still lives alone; a wife was divorced when her exposure was discovered. The suffering continues.

"Madotekure!" This is the heartbroken cry of hibakusha who want Hiroshima-their hometown, their families, their own minds and bodies-put back the way it was.

One hundred years after opening as the Hiroshima Prefectural Commercial Exhibition Hall and 70 years after the atomic bombing, the A-bomb Dome still watches over Hiroshima. In front of this witness to history, I want us all, once again, to face squarely what the A-bomb did and embrace fully the spirit of the hibakusha.

Meanwhile, our world still bristles with more than 15,000 nuclear weapons, and policymakers in the nuclear-armed states remain trapped in provincial thinking, repeating by word and deed their nuclear intimidation. We now know about the many incidents and accidents that have taken us to the brink of nuclear war or nuclear explosions. Today, we worry as well about nuclear terrorism.

As long as nuclear weapons exist, anyone could become a hibakusha at any time. If that happens, the damage will reach indiscriminately beyond national borders. People of the world, please listen carefully to the words of the hibakusha and, profoundly accepting the spirit of Hiroshima, contemplate the nuclear problem as your own.

A woman who was 16 at the time appeals, "Expanding ever wider the circle of harmony that includes your family, friends, and neighbors links directly to world peace. Empathy, kindness, solidarity -- these are not just intellectual concepts; we have to feel them in our bones." A man who was 12 emphasizes, "War means tragedy for adults and children alike. Empathy, caring, loving others and oneself -- this is where peace comes from."

These heartrending messages, forged in a cauldron of suffering and sorrow, transcend hatred and rejection. Their spirit is generosity and love for humanity; their focus is the future of humankind.

Human beings transcend differences of nationality, race, religion, and language to live out our one-time-only lives on the planet we share. To coexist we must abolish the absolute evil and ultimate inhumanity that is nuclear weapons. Now is the time to start taking action. Young people are already starting petition

drives, posting messages, organizing marches and launching a variety of efforts. Let's all work together to build an enormous groundswell.

In this milestone 70th year, the average hibakusha is now over 80 years old. The city of Hiroshima will work even harder to preserve the facts of the bombing, disseminate them to the world, and convey them to coming generations. At the same time, as president of Mayors for Peace, now with more than 6,700 member cities, Hiroshima will act with determination, doing everything in our power to accelerate the international trend toward negotiations for a nuclear weapons convention and abolition of nuclear weapons by 2020.

Is it not the policymakers' proper role to pursue happiness for their own people based on generosity and love of humanity? Policymakers meeting tirelessly to talk -- this is the first step toward nuclear weapons abolition. The next step is to create, through the trust thus won, broadly versatile security systems that do not depend on military might. Working with patience and perseverance to achieve those systems will be vital, and will require that we promote throughout the world the path to true peace revealed by the pacifism of the Japanese Constitution.

The summit meeting to be held in Japan's Ise-Shima next year and the foreign ministers' meeting to be held in Hiroshima prior to that summit are perfect opportunities to deliver a message about the abolition of nuclear weapons. President Obama and other policymakers, please come to the A-bombed cities, hear the hibakusha with your own ears, and encounter the reality of the atomic bombings. Surely, you will be impelled to start discussing a legal framework, including a nuclear weapons convention.

We call on the Japanese government, in its role as bridge between the nuclear- and non-nuclear-weapon states, to guide all states toward these discussions, and we offer Hiroshima as the venue for dialogue and outreach. In addition, we ask that greater compassion for our elderly hibakusha and the many others who now suffer the effects of radiation be expressed through stronger support measures. In particular, we demand expansion of the "black rain areas."

Offering our heartfelt prayers for the peaceful repose of the A-bomb victims, we express as well our gratitude to the hibakusha and all our predecessors who worked so hard throughout their lives to rebuild Hiroshima and abolish nuclear weapons. Finally, we appeal to the people of the world: renew your determination. Let us work together with all our might for the abolition of nuclear weapons and the realization of lasting world peace.

MATSUI Kazumi

Mayor

The City of Hiroshima

Passing on the memory

August 6, 2015

Hiroshima marks 70th A-bomb anniv. amid fears of eroded pacifism

<http://mainichi.jp/english/english/newsselect/news/20150806p2g00m0dm001000c.html>



A woman, right, who lost her mother- and sister-in-law to the Hiroshima atomic bomb prays with her daughter, second from right, and great-granddaughter, second from left at front, in front of the Memorial Cenotaph in Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park in Hiroshima, on Aug. 6, 2015. The day marked 70 years since an atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima on Aug. 6, 1945. (Mainichi)

HIROSHIMA (Kyodo) -- Hiroshima marked the 70th anniversary of the U.S. atomic bombing of the city on Thursday, with Mayor Kazumi Matsui urging world leaders to renew their resolve to abolish nuclear weapons and pursue peace as embodied in Japan's war-renouncing Constitution.

At a memorial ceremony in the western city, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe joined Matsui in highlighting the role Japan should fulfill as the only country to have suffered nuclear attacks, but did not touch on the ongoing defense policy shift that has drawn criticism from atomic bomb survivors as eroding Japan's pacifism.

After the event, representatives of local atomic bomb survivors' groups directly pressed Abe to retract controversial security bills that would end the country's ban on exercising the right to collective self-defense, or defend allies under armed attack even when Japan itself is not attacked.

"We want you to immediately withdraw the policy to allow the use of the right to collective self-defense, which would draw our people into war," one of the groups said in a statement. But Abe told them in a meeting that the bills in parliament are essential to "preventing war" and that the country's "course as a peaceful state will never change."

In sweltering heat, around 55,000 people gathered at the Peace Memorial Park and held a moment of silence at 8:15 a.m., the exact moment the atomic bomb detonated over the city on Aug. 6, 1945, killing an estimated 140,000 people by the end of the year.

Also present were representatives from a record 100 nations, including the United States, which in an unprecedented move sent a high-level official from Washington to join the event along with U.S.

Ambassador to Japan Caroline Kennedy.

In the Peace Declaration read at the ceremony, Matsui did not directly mention the security bills. Instead, he encouraged world leaders to demonstrate their "love of humanity" and meet "tirelessly to talk," saying that doing so is the first step toward nuclear weapons abolition.

"The next step is to create, through the trust thus won, broadly versatile security systems that do not depend on military might," he said.

Matsui also called for the need to promote worldwide "the path to true peace revealed by the pacifism of the Japanese Constitution," whose Article 9 forever renounces war and the use of force as a means of settling international disputes.

Given that Japan will host next year's summit of the Group of Seven industrialized nations, Matsui reiterated his hope that U.S. President Barack Obama and other world leaders will visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki to hear firsthand accounts of atomic bomb survivors.

According to U.S. State Department deputy spokesman Mark Toner, sending to the memorial ceremony Rose Gottemoeller, U.S. undersecretary of state for arms control and international security, underscores Washington's eagerness to work with Japan to advance Obama's goal of realizing a world without nuclear weapons, which he advocated in his Prague speech in 2009.

As for Japan's role in the pursuit, the prime minister said in the speech that the government will take "realistic and practical" steps towards a nuclear-weapons-free world and seek to make the inhumane nature of nuclear weapons widely known.

Abe also said he will introduce a new draft resolution on the elimination of nuclear weapons to the U.N. General Assembly in the autumn, which sources close to the matter say may include a call on world leaders to visit the atomic-bombed cities.

A second atomic bomb was dropped on Nagasaki on Aug. 9 the same year, killing an estimated 70,000 people. Japan surrendered six days later, bringing an end to World War II.

The number of hibakusha in and outside Japan -- atomic bomb survivors with documents certifying that they experienced the terrible bombing 70 years ago -- stood at 183,519 in March this year, nearly half of its peak of 372,264 in 1980, according to the Health, Labor and Welfare Ministry. Their average age exceeded 80 for the first time this year.

Hailing survivors as "unparalleled champions of peace," U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki Moon said in a statement read out during the ceremony that the United Nations will stand with the survivors, determined to realize their vision of eliminating nuclear weapons.

But the ideal faces an uphill battle, with more than 15,000 nuclear weapons estimated to exist in the world at present, most of them in U.S. and Russian arsenals.

In the declaration, Matsui urged the Japanese government to "guide all states" toward discussions on outlawing nuclear arsenals, although Tokyo has been cautious about supporting the move as the country has relied on the U.S. nuclear deterrence for protection.

From the early morning, atomic bomb survivors and other citizens visited the park near the hypocenter to mourn the people who perished in the bombing and hope for peace.

Toshio Fujimura, an 84-year-old survivor who lives in Ehime Prefecture, said, "If war occurs again and an atomic bomb were dropped more people could die....War is miserable and sad."

Janet McKinlay, a 61-year-old former teacher from Canada, could hardly hold back her tears as she visited the park to attend the ceremony with a friend who was born on the day of the bombing. "It is so horrible what people do to each other. I guess we're all here wishing for peace."

Why not this year?

August 6, 2015

PM Abe makes no mention of 3 non-nuclear principles in A-bomb anniversary speech

<http://mainichi.jp/english/english/newsselect/news/20150806p2a00m0na021000c.html>

HIROSHIMA -- Prime Minister Shinzo Abe made no mention of the country's self-imposed "three non-nuclear principles" in his speech during a ceremony to mark the 70th anniversary of the U.S. atomic bombing of Hiroshima on Aug. 6.

Successive Japanese prime ministers have attended memorial ceremonies in Hiroshima and given speeches since 1994. But it was the first time for a prime minister to make no mention of the "three non-nuclear principles" that ban the possession, production and import of nuclear arms. Prime Minister Abe has attended the Hiroshima memorial ceremony for three consecutive years. He had said Japan would stick to the three non-nuclear principles during three previous memorial ceremonies, including one in 2007 during his first stint as prime minister.

Hibakusha (A-bomb survivors) who attended the memorial ceremony were shocked and disappointed by the fact that Abe did not touch on the three non-nuclear principles in his speech. Yuriko Kinoshita, a 70-year-old housewife in Hiroshima's Naka Ward who offered flowers at the ceremony as a representative of Hiroshima citizens, said, "Why didn't he include them? I hope this year will not become a turning point toward war." Toyoko Okamura, 74, from Hatsuka, Hiroshima Prefecture, who lost her elder brother in the atomic bombing, said, "That's too bad because I am hoping for the realization of a world free of nuclear weapons."

After the memorial ceremony, Abe attended a meeting held at a Hiroshima hotel to hear requests from representatives of hibakusha groups. Abe said at the meeting that the government will "stick to the three non-nuclear principles" as its basic policy. Yukio Yoshioka, 86-year-old secretary-general of the Hiroshima Alliance of A-bomb Survivor Organizations, said, "The three non-nuclear principles are the state's basic policy founded on victims of atomic bombings." He went on to say, "I wanted him to touch on the three

non-nuclear principles at the ceremony while facing the cenotaph for A-bomb victims. If this goes on, the victims of atomic bombings cannot rest in peace."

In his speech at the Aug. 6 memorial ceremony, Prime Minister Abe made no reference to security-related bills that are currently being deliberated in the House of Councillors. At the meeting to hear requests from representatives of A-bomb survivors, members of hibakusha groups bitterly criticized the security legislation, saying for example, "The contents and procedures violate the Constitution." As a common request, seven hibakusha groups jointly demanded the government withdraw the security-related bills, stating, "It is an ultimate act of going against the long-standing wishes of hibakusha."

In reference to the security-related bills, Abe called for understanding from hibakusha, saying, "We need them to avert war."

Japan Times articles on the 70th anniversary of A-bomb

The Japan Times has published a whole series of articles on the 70th A-bomb anniversary :
<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/tag/wwii-70th-anniversary/>

Ban Ki-moon's message

August 6, 2015

Text of U.N. chief Ban Ki-moon's message to memorial ceremony on A-bomb anniversary

http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2015/08/06/national/text-u-n-chief-ban-ki-moons-message-memorial-ceremony-bomb-anniversary/#.VcMRk_nwmov

Kyodo

HIROSHIMA – *Below is the text of a message from U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon read out at the memorial ceremony in Hiroshima on the 70th anniversary Thursday of the U.S. atomic bombing:*

I am honored to send this message to all participants at the Peace Memorial Ceremony marking the solemn 70th anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima. I am grateful to the organizers and all those who have gathered for this remembrance. Your commemoration should reverberate from this city across the world, reminding all people of the need for urgent action to eliminate nuclear weapons once and for all. Seven decades after their first use in conflict, this somber occasion commemorates the tens of thousands who died that day. It honors the survivors who have suffered severe adversity in the aftermath. The United Nations stands with them, resolved to realize their vision of a nuclear-weapon-free world.

My own commitment was reinforced during my visit to Hiroshima five years ago. I will always carry the memories of meeting the survivors, witnessing the destruction and seeing the lingering effects. The courage of those who lived through this catastrophic, man-made tragedy was deeply inspiring. The hibakusha are more than survivors — they are unparalleled champions of peace. From their searing experiences, they have forged a message of hope that someday the world will be free of these indiscriminate and destabilizing weapons.

I pay tribute to the bravery of the hibakusha and renew my resolve to advance our common cause of achieving a safer and more peaceful world, free of the nuclear shadow.

This year is also the 70th anniversary of the United Nations. The first resolution adopted by the General Assembly reflected the world's concern about the use of atomic weapons. As you keep the memory of the bombing alive, so, too, must the international community persist until we have ensured that nuclear weapons are eliminated.

I echo your rallying cry: No more Hiroshimas. No more Nagasakis.

In the months after the bombing, it was said that trees and other plants would not grow for 75 years. Now, seven decades later, this vibrant city is proof of the resilience of its people and a monument to the indomitable spirit of humanity. You are an inspiration to the world, which has a responsibility to honor your experience by ensuring a world free of nuclear weapons.

Nukes "still a necessary tool"?

August 6, 2015

Nuclear peace: mankind's most dangerous bluff?

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2015/08/06/world/politics-diplomacy-world/nuclear-peace-mankinds-dangerous-bluff/#.VcMPYvnwmot>

AFP-JIJI

PARIS – In the nervous aftermath of the Hiroshima bombing 70 years ago, citizens spent decades on alert for a nuclear war that would wipe out billions in a radioactive firestorm and render Earth uninhabitable. Yet the apocalypse never came.

Instead an unprecedented period of peace took hold between nuclear-armed global powers aware that a wrong move could wipe out the human race.

Nukes could never stop smaller wars and proxy conflicts — and look increasingly impotent against modern non-state threats such as jihadist groups or cyberattacks — but “they are still a necessary tool,” said Mark Fitzpatrick, a nuclear security expert at the London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies.

“It is pretty clear that mutually assured destruction has contributed to the absence of global war for the last 70 years,” he said.

Nonetheless, as the atomic generation gives way to one that did not grow up building fallout shelters, some experts say nuclear weapons are no longer the ultimate guarantor of global peace.

Growing instability around the world — the renewed rift between Russia and the West, simmering tensions between nuclear-armed India and Pakistan, a drive by China to modernize its nuclear forces and an ever-more bellicose North Korea — have undermined efforts to reduce the global stockpile of nuclear weapons and keep doomsday at bay.

With ties between Moscow and the West at Cold War lows, Russia has fallen back on its nuclear threat, boosting its arsenal and increasing flights by strategic bombers, in what NATO has described as “dangerous nuclear sabre-rattling”.

Nuclear weapons are seen in Moscow as “ultimate proof that Russia is a great power” despite its struggling economy and poor international image, said Pavel Baev, a Russian military expert at the Peace Research Institute Oslo.

He warned that Putin and his top brass had not “gone to the school of nuclear deterrence” and did not understand the “extraordinarily dangerous game” they were playing.

Bruno Tertrais, an expert at the Paris-based Foundation for Strategic Research, said the fear of mutual devastation still made “large-scale military conflict between Russia and NATO unthinkable”.

But as weapons spread to more volatile parts of the world, the threat of nuclear war grows.

Nine nations — the United States, Russia, Britain, France, China, India, Pakistan, Israel and North Korea — possess some 16,300 nuclear weapons between them, according to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute.

Fitzpatrick said “it is quite thinkable that there would be a smaller-scale nuclear war involving some of the other countries that are nuclear armed”.

He said the most likely confrontation would be between long-standing foes India and Pakistan, which could be enough to create a so-called nuclear winter. In such a scenario, the sun would be blocked out by smoke, causing a devastating cooling of the Earth.

If there were another attack like those in Mumbai in 2008 when Pakistan-based terrorists went on a four-day killing spree in the city, India’s government “may not turn the other cheek”, he said.

The risk is all the greater as weapons become more powerful.

“A single ballistic missile carries almost three times more nuclear explosive power” than both the bombs dropped by the US on Hiroshima and Nagasaki together, said Steven Starr of the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation.

Other risks for nuclear conflict are the accidental releasing of a bomb, or the “significant possibility” that “a group of six terrorists with the right knowledge could put a bomb together,” said Fitzpatrick.

Ward Wilson of the Rethinking Nuclear Weapons Project said the problem with nuclear deterrence was its reliance on individuals remaining rational.

“If human beings are fallible, and human beings are involved in nuclear deterrence, then nuclear deterrence is inherently flawed and will one day fail catastrophically.”

He also warned that “if you wait long enough then a madman will pop up in one of the nine nuclear states”. Such fears have compelled leaders to call for a nuclear-free world.

U.S. President Barack Obama made it an early focus of his foreign policy, warning in a historic 2009 speech in Prague that “as more people and nations break the rules, we could reach the point where the centre cannot hold”.

But despite going on to seal a new treaty with Moscow to reduce deployed nuclear weapons, his progress has stalled and the U.S. is spending billions upgrading its nuclear arsenal.

“He hasn’t had good partners in Russia, in Pakistan, the Senate — there are reasons why he hasn’t been able to make progress,” said Fitzpatrick.

Other countries such as France believe nuclear deterrence is more relevant than ever.

“The international context does not allow for any weakness... the era of nuclear deterrence is therefore not over,” French President Francois Hollande said in February.

Iran’s Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif wrote in The Guardian last week that the concept of mutually assured destruction was “insane” and called for negotiations on a weapons elimination treaty.

But Fitzpatrick says nuclear weapons “are not going away anytime in the foreseeable future... as they are seen as the ultimate insurance protecting national security.”

Nuclear pessimists say this means the apocalypse scenario is still on the table.

“It is a miracle the human race has managed to escape the final nuclear war,” said Starr.

“Don’t count on us making it another 70 years.”

Martin Luther King's message still valid

August 5, 2015

MLK’s fears of nuclear devastation should continue to resonate

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/community/2015/08/05/voices/mlks-fears-nuclear-devastation-continue-resonate/#.VcJwpfnwmou>

by Patrick Parr

“The principal objective of all nations must be the total abolition of war. War must be finally eliminated or the whole of mankind will be plunged into the abyss of annihilation.”

Martin Luther King Jr., December 1957

Sixteen weeks to the day before Martin Luther King Jr. was shot dead on a hotel balcony in Memphis, he decided to write a letter to the people of Japan. In the letter, King expressed a great desire to visit the country and introduce himself along with his message of nuclear disarmament.

Dated Dec. 13, 1967, the letter is a fine example of how King had begun to tackle larger, more global issues. He marveled at how Japan had been able to resurrect itself into an economic power after experiencing nuclear devastation. He also, however, prodded Japan on how the country had at the time been treating war orphans of mixed heritage.

A visit from King to Japan may sound at first like some kind of empty celebrity visit designed to amplify the legend of the visitor, but there were signs that it could have been much more. For example, King only visited Seattle once in his life, a three-day trip during which he delivered several speeches and ate some barbecue before flying back to the U.S. East Coast. Today, the name of the county Seattle resides within is called King County, and the city’s public buses all bear his face.

Even now, Hiroshima is one of the only cities outside North America to honor Martin Luther King Day, thanks in large part to former Hiroshima Mayor Tadatoshi Akiba, who often used King’s words in his speeches to better articulate the argument for nuclear disarmament. For example, in a speech at a U.S. Conference of Mayors luncheon in Washington in 2005, Akiba spoke of the fiery way in which King rejected the notion of nuclear weapons. King once said, “I refuse to accept the cynical notion that nation after nation must spiral down a militaristic stairway into the hell of nuclear annihilation.”

One week before his death, King was still haunted by visions of what the world might look like after the use of nuclear weapons. “The whole world may well be plunged into the abyss of annihilation, and our earthly habitat transformed into an inferno that even the mind of Dante could not imagine,” he warned. In today’s world, it appears that the threat of nuclear annihilation has been usurped by the specter of climate change, and even that issue has seen sharper days. As Hiroshima honors the 70th anniversary of the bombings, it seems as if, with each passing year, the threat of nuclear attacks is diminishing. While this is of course a good thing, it also creates a new challenge: No one feels it is vital to talk about this anymore.

As you read this, there are close to 16,000 nuclear weapons in the world. One average-sized missile would be enough to decimate an entire city. And yet, developed countries continue to hold stockpiles of thousands of nuclear weapons . . . well, *just in case*.

It is a dangerous concept, this idea of having something “just in case.” In America, millions of families keep guns at their homes, just in case. Although a great deal of time has passed since King made these remarks, this just-in-case concept has been true ever since the United States started stockpiling its weapons arsenal just in case Russia . . . well, you know . . . and it continues to this day.

Perhaps, for this article, the last word should be given to Dr. King, who died fighting for nonviolence. Even in January 1959, at the age of 30, the nuclear issue cast a shadow over a moment of reflection by King on the successes of the civil rights movement. King had made an incredible amount of progress in such a short time, and yet he could sense a fair amount of meaninglessness to it all if one issue was never solved. “What will be the ultimate value of having established social justice in a context where all people . . . are merely free to face destruction by . . . atomic war?” he asked.

There really is no easy solution. What must be understood, however, is that the very act of keeping nuclear weapons is a violation of our rights as human beings. You could say, when you strip away all the fanfare and complexities, that we are basically given one right when we are born: the right to live. That’s it. And that concept has been in danger ever since 8:15 a.m. on Aug. 6, 1945.

View King’s letter to the people of Japan here: bit.ly/mlkjapan

Hans Blix: "The nuclear peril is still there"

August 5, 2015

UNSC members to ban their own WMD

http://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2015/08/05/commentary/japan-commentary/time-uns-members-ban-wmd/#.VcJxP_nwmot



by Hans Blix

STOCKHOLM – The nuclear agreement between Iran, the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council plus Germany, and the EU, comes at a historically propitious moment. Seventy years ago, the nuclear bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki opened the darkest chapter in the long history of humanity's wartime horrors. Fire, bullets and bayonets were now joined by nuclear radiation — a silent, invisible killer like gas and biological agents.

After World War I, the international community adopted the so-called Gas Protocol, to prohibit the use of chemical and bacteriological weapons. Likewise, the demand to ban any use of nuclear weapons has been strong and persistent since the end of World War II.

But the states possessing nuclear weapons have always opposed such a ban, arguing that it would not be credible. Instead, they have recommended a step-by-step approach, eventually leading to a ban on the possession and production of nuclear weapons. After all, the same approach brought about today's strict limits on biological and chemical weapons.

Yet 70 years after Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the gradualist approach has clearly failed. During the Cold War, the total number of nuclear weapons worldwide climbed to more than 50,000. Many, including hydrogen bombs, had explosive yields that were orders of magnitude higher than the bombs dropped on Japan.

Some measures were agreed to reduce the nuclear danger: bilateral arms-control agreements between the United States and the Soviet Union, restrictions on the testing of new weapons, and — above all — the Non-Proliferation Treaty. The aim of the NPT, signed in 1968, is the universal elimination of nuclear weapons: non-nuclear-weapon states commit not to acquire them, and the five states that officially

possess them (the U.S., the United Kingdom, France, China and Russia) commit to disarmament negotiations.

But the overall threat has never diminished much. To be sure, the first part of the NPT has had some success: Since the treaty entered into force, only four states — India, Israel, North Korea, and Pakistan — have developed nuclear weapons.

South Africa eliminated its nuclear weapons and became a party to the NPT, while Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakhstan transferred their nuclear arsenals to Russia. Two states — Iraq and Libya — were stopped from developing nuclear weapons, and now Iran, a party to the treaty, has eliminated its nuclear weapons and became a party to the NPT, while Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakhstan transferred their nuclear arsenals to Russia. Two states — Iraq and Libya — were stopped from developing nuclear weapons, and now Iran, a party to the treaty, has committed to abide by important restrictions on its nuclear program. And yet the commitment of the five nuclear-weapon states to disarm has had very limited results. Nuclear stockpiles were reduced — mainly for economic reasons — following the Cold War, to less than 20,000 nuclear weapons worldwide (still enough to destroy humanity several times over). And the 2010 New START agreement brought welcome upper limits to the number of nuclear weapons deployed by the U.S. and Russia. But no serious disarmament negotiations have been pursued since.

Moreover, it was once hoped that NATO's small number of non-strategic nuclear weapons sited in Europe could be withdrawn to the U.S., as they were widely considered militarily useless. Doing so, it was suggested, could lead Russia to remove its own tactical nuclear weapons. Neither action has been taken. Likewise, the hope that the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), adopted in 1996, would become binding has not been realized. A moratorium on such tests exists, and an impressive monitoring machinery has been created, able to register not only weapons tests, but also earthquakes and tsunamis. Yet, because eight countries, including the U.S. and China, have failed to ratify it, the CTBT occupies a legal netherworld: it may be said to be in operation, but not in force.

Rather than nuclear disarmament, the world is witnessing an upgrading — and, in some cases, expansion — of nuclear arsenals. There is little hope of any change for the better unless the Security Council's permanent members conclude that their own security requires resuming detente among themselves and launching serious disarmament negotiations, as promised. They have shown their willingness to act to restrain other states from acquiring weapons of mass destruction; now it is time for them to restrain themselves.

Of course, just as some states refuse to join the conventions that ban cluster bombs and land mines, the nuclear-weapon states will not join a convention banning their arsenals. Yet the existence of such a treaty could serve as a constant reminder of what is expected of them. For that reason alone, it should become an international priority.

During the Cold War, many people feared that mankind might commit suicide abruptly, by waging a nuclear war. Today, more people may worry that humanity will suffer a more prolonged death through global warming. But the nuclear peril is still there, and groups like Global Zero deserve our support in their efforts to raise public awareness.

It has been said that Hiroshima and Nagasaki created a taboo against any further use of nuclear weapons. Let us hope so, but let us also demand that the taboo be made legally binding.

Hans Blix, former director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency, was first executive chairman of the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission from 2000 to 2003. © Project Syndicate, 2015.

Japan Times reporting of the bombings at the time

August 5, 2015

How The Japan Times reported the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki

http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2015/08/05/national/history/japan-times-reported-atomic-bombings-hiroshima-nagasaki/#.VcH0E_nwmot

by Alastair Wanklyn

Staff Writer

This newspaper described the ebb and flow of the war in considerable detail. Censorship was in operation, but the Nippon Times offered voluminous coverage in English based on statements by the Imperial authorities, reports by vernacular Japanese newspapers and foreign news agency dispatches, archival records show.

On Aug. 6, 1945, bombing of Hiroshima was approved for print the following day and the Aug. 8 edition contained a terse statement within a longer article about U.S. and British air raids.

"Hiroshima was attacked by a small number of Superforts at 8:20 a.m. Monday," the newspaper said, referring to the U.S. B-29 Superfortress bomber. "The enemy dropped explosives and incendiaries. Damage is now being investigated."

Readers had to wait a further day to get a sense of the severity.

"New-type bombs were used by the small number of Superforts that raided Hiroshima on Monday morning, causing considerable damage to the city quarters," the newspaper said on Aug. 9, citing an Imperial Headquarters statement.

"The explosive power of the new bomb is now under investigation, but it is considered that it should not be made light of," the newspaper said.

If readers in Japan were spared the details, the bomb's horror was by now known overseas. The Nippon Times alluded to this in its Aug. 9 report, saying a Vatican spokesman had referred to the bomb as "a further step in the direction of indiscriminate deployment of means of destruction."

Meanwhile on Aug. 9, the city of Nagasaki was destroyed in history's second atomic bombing. The newspaper first mentioned this on Aug. 12, quoting military authorities as calling the damage "comparatively slight." It failed to report that city's destruction until a full 16 days after the event, and gave no reason for this.

The archives show how authorities responded to the attacks. On Aug. 10, the newspaper conveyed advice for new air raid procedures. "The new-type bomb . . . is dropped by parachute. At about 500 to 600 meters above the ground, it issues a strong light and explodes. The blast of the bomb is powerful and strong heat is spread all over."

It quoted the Home Ministry as telling people to seek shelter even if only a lone plane appears.

"Choose a shelter which has a covering. In case there is no cover, one should protect oneself with a blanket or futon."

The ministry added, "People in the open are likely to suffer burns. . . . The hands and legs should be given full protection."

On Aug. 10, the Imperial authorities delivered a protest to Washington via the Swiss government, saying that although the U.S. had disavowed the use of poison gas on account of its indiscriminate nature, this bomb was far worse.

The protest accused the U.S. of committing “a sin against the culture of the human race by using a bomb which harms more indiscriminately and is more cruel than any weapon or missile which has been used in the past.”

It described Hiroshima as “a common ordinary urban community without any particular military defense facilities. . . . By individual cases of damage done, it was unprecedentedly cruel.”

The Japanese people learned of the surrender on Aug. 15 when the Emperor’s recorded address was broadcast to the nation. The following day, the Nippon Times described a conference at the Imperial Palace “which had no precedent in history.”

It said Emperor Hirohito had addressed ministers and heads of the Imperial army and navy, saying “‘Whatever happens to Us, We cannot stand to see the nation suffer further hardships.’

“All those in attendance, upon hearing these benevolent Imperial Words, burst into tears in spite of the August presence,” it said.

pan

"Practically all living things...were seared to death"



For the photos, please check the paper's site

August 5, 2015

Stories of unprecedented destruction and Japan's eventual surrender

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2015/08/05/national/history/stories-of-unprecedented-destruction-and-japans-eventual-surrender/#.VcH2mPnwmot>

The remains of a factory are seen (upper left) in Nagasaki on Sept. 4, 1945, gutted by the Aug. 9 atomic bombing. | AP

AP

On two days in August 1945, U.S. planes dropped two atomic bombs — one on Hiroshima, one on Nagasaki, the only times nuclear weapons have been used. Their unprecedented destructive power incinerated buildings and people and left lifelong physical and psychological scars on survivors and on the cities themselves.

“Practically all living things, human and animal, were literally seared to death,” an AP story reported. A few days later, Japan announced its unconditional surrender. World War II was effectively over.

Seventy years later, AP is making stories about the bombings and surrender available, along with photos.

Washington, Aug. 6

An atomic bomb, hailed as the most terrible destructive force in history and as the greatest achievement of organized science, has been loosed upon Japan.

President (Harry) Truman disclosed in a White House statement at 11 a.m. Eastern War Time today that the first use of the bomb — containing more power than 20,000 tons of TNT and producing more than 2,000 times the blast of the most powerful bomb ever dropped before — was made 16 hours earlier on Hiroshima, a Japanese army base.

U.S. President Harry Truman, with a radio at hand, reads reports of the first atomic bomb raid on Japan aboard the cruiser Augusta on Aug. 6, 1945, while en route home from the Potsdam conference. | AP(Tokyo Radio announced that Hiroshima was raided at 8:20 a.m. Monday (7:20 p.m. Sunday, United States Eastern War Time). That is about the time the bomb was dropped, but the Tokyo broadcast, recorded by the FCC, made no mention of any unusual destruction. It reported only that “a small number” of American B-29s attacked the city on southwestern Honshu with incendiary and explosive bombs.)

The raid on Hiroshima, located on Honshu Island on the shores of the Inland Sea, had not been disclosed previously although the 25th Air Force on Guam announced that 580 Superforts raided four Japanese cities at about the same time.

The atomic bomb is the answer, President Truman said, to Japan's refusal to surrender. Secretary of War (Henry) Stimson predicted the bomb will prove a tremendous aid in shortening the Japanese war. Mr. Truman grimly warned that “even more powerful forms (of the bomb) are in development.”

“If they do not now accept our terms, they may expect a rain of ruin from the air the like of which has never been seen on this earth,” he said.

Smoke rises around 20,000 feet above Hiroshima after the first atomic bomb was dropped on Aug. 6, 1945. | APThe War Department reported that “an impenetrable cloud of dust and smoke” cloaked Hiroshima after the bomb exploded. It was impossible to make an immediate assessment of the damage.

President Truman said he would recommend that Congress consider establishing a commission to control production of atomic power within the United States.

“I shall make recommendations to Congress as to how atomic power can become a powerful and forceful influence towards the maintenance of world peace,” he said. Both Mr. Truman and Stimson, while emphasizing the peacetime potentiality of the new force, made clear that much research must be undertaken to effect full peacetime application of its principles.

The product of \$2,000,000,000 spent in research and production, the atomic bomb has been one of the most closely guarded secrets of the war. Franklin D. Roosevelt and Winston Churchill gave the signal to start work on harnessing the forces of the atom. Mr. Truman said the Germans worked feverishly, but failed to solve the problem.

Meantime, American and British scientists studied the problem and developed two principal plants and some lesser factories for the production of atomic power.

The president disclosed that more than 65,000 persons now are working in great secrecy in these plants, adding: “We have spent \$2,000,000,000 on the greatest scientific gamble in history — and won. We are now prepared to obliterate more rapidly and completely every productive enterprise the Japs have above ground in any city. We shall completely destroy Japan’s power to make war.”

The President noted that the Big Three ultimatum issued on July 26 at Potsdam was intended “to spare the Japanese people from utter destruction,” and the Japanese leaders rejected it. The atomic bomb now is the answer to that rejection, and the President said: “They may expect a rain of ruin from the air, the like of which has never been seen on this earth.”

Mr. Truman forecast that sea and land forces will follow up this air attack in such numbers and power as the Japanese never have witnessed. The President said that this discovery may open the way for an entirely new concept of force and power. The actual harnessing of atomic energy may in the future supplement the power that now comes from coal, oil and the great dams, he said.

“It has never been the habit of the scientists of this country or the policy of this government to withhold from the world scientific knowledge,” Mr. Truman said. “Normally, therefore, everything about the work with atomic energy would be made public.”

That will have to wait, however, he said, until the war emergency is over.

Guam, Aug. 9

The world's second atomic bomb, most destructive explosive invented by man, was dropped on strategically important Nagasaki on western Kyushu Island at noon today.

Crew members radioed that results were good, but Gen. Carl A. Spaatz said additional details would not be disclosed until the mission returns.

Gen. Spaatz's communique reporting the bombing did not say whether only one or more than one "mighty atom" was dropped.

A mushroom cloud rises moments after an atomic bomb is dropped on Nagasaki on Aug. 9, 1945. | APThe first atomic bomb destroyed more than 60 percent — 4.1 square miles — of Hiroshima, city of 343,000 population, Monday, and radio Tokyo reported "practically every living thing" there was annihilated.

Although the second A-bomb was dropped on the day Russia went to war with Japan, it was not believed there had been any plan to make the two simultaneous.

Nagasaki, which had 211,000 population 10 years ago, is an important shipping and railway center. It was hit first by China-based B-29s a year ago this month and was heavily attacked by Far East Air Force bombers and fighters only last July 31 and on the following day.

Nagasaki, although only two-thirds as large as Hiroshima in population, is considered more important industrially. With a population now estimated at 255,000, its 12 square miles are packed with eave-to-eave buildings, which won it the name "sea of roofs."

It was vitally important as a port for transshipment of military supplies and the embarkation of troops in support of Japan's operation in China, Formosa, Southeast Asia and the southwest Pacific. It was highly important as a major shipbuilding and repair center for both naval and merchantmen. The city also included industrial suburbs of Inase and Akunoua on the western side of the harbor and Urakami. The bombing area is nearly double Hiroshima's.

The skeleton of a Catholic Church and an unidentified building are all that remain at the blast center area on Sept. 5, 1945, after the atomic bombing of Hiroshima the month before. | APJapanese perished by uncounted thousands from the searing, crushing atomic blast that smashed Hiroshima, photographic and other evidence indicated today.

The Tokyo radio, which said that "practically all living things, human and animal, were literally seared to death," reported that authorities were still unable to check the total casualties.

Following is the complete text of the Tokyo English-language broadcast as recorded by the Federal Communications Commission:

"With the gradual restoration of order following the disastrous ruin that struck the city of Hiroshima in the wake of the enemy's new-type bomb on Monday morning, the authorities are still unable to obtain a definite check-up on the extent of the casualties sustained by the civilian population.

Survivors of the atomic bomb await emergency medical treatment in Hiroshima on Aug. 6, 1945. | AP
“Medical relief agencies that were rushed from the neighboring districts were unable to distinguish, much less identify, the dead from the injured.

“The impact of the bomb was so terrific that practically all living things, human and animals, were literally seared to death by the tremendous heat and pressure engendered by the blast. All of the dead and injured were burned beyond recognition.

“With houses and buildings crushed, including the emergency medical facilities, the authorities are having their hands full in giving every available relief possible under the circumstances.

“The effect of the bomb was widespread. Those outdoors burned to death, while those indoors were killed by the indescribable pressure and heat.”

Atomic bomb survivors receive emergency treatment by military medics on Aug. 6, 1945, in Hiroshima. | AP

Washington, Aug. 14

The second world war, history’s greatest flood of death and destruction, ended tonight with Japan’s unconditional surrender.

Formalities still remained — the official signing of surrender terms and a proclamation of V-J Day. But from the moment President Truman announced at 7 p.m. (EWT) that the enemy of the Pacific had agreed to Allied terms, the world put aside for a time woeful thoughts of the cost in dead and dollars and celebrated in wild frenzy. Formalities meant nothing to people freed at last of war. To reporters crammed into his office, shoving now-useless war maps against a marble mantle, the president disclosed that:

Japan, without ever being invaded, had accepted completely and without reservation an Allied declaration of Potsdam, dictating unconditional surrender.

There is to be no power for the Japanese emperor — although Allies will let him remain their tool. No longer will the warlords reign, through him. Hirohito — or any successor — will take orders from MacArthur.

(From Tokyo just before midnight EWT came a broadcast saying Emperor Hirohito had told the Japanese people by radio that the Allies had begun “to employ a new and most cruel bomb” — the atomic bomb — and that to continue to fight “would lead to the total extinction of human civilization.”

(Hirohito said “this is the reason” the Japanese decided to get out of the war.)

Allied forces were forced to “suspend offensive action” everywhere.

From now on, only men under 26 will be drafted. Army draft calls will be cut from 80,000 a month to 50,000. Mr. Truman forecast that 5 million to 5.5 million soldiers may be released within 12 to 18 months.

The surrender announcement set in motion a whole chain of events. Among them:

To a Japanese government which once had boasted it would dictate peace terms to the White House, Mr. Truman dispatched orders to “direct prompt cessation of hostilities, tell MacArthur of the effective date, and hour, and send emissaries to the general to arrange formal surrender.

The War Manpower Commission terminated all manpower controls.

The Navy piled a \$6,000,000,000 cancellation of contracts on top of a previous \$1,300,000,000 cut in its shipbuilding program.

Congress was summoned back to work on Sept. 5, more than a month ahead of schedule, to get busy on unemployment compensation, surplus property disposal, full employment, government reorganization and the continuation or abolition of war agencies.

The Office of Censorship said it was getting ready to fold up. News, radio, and mail censorship are due to end on V-J Day.

Director Elmer Davis declared the life of the Office of War Information “soon will be over.”

A War Production Board official predicted that agency would go out of business once industry is on a solid footing.

Those were developments which on any other night would have commanded smash headlines. Those developments and surrender capped a week packed with some of history’s most stunning news:

The first atomic bomb on Hiroshima, Russia’s declaration of war, another atomic bomb on Nagasaki, Japan’s offer to surrender if she could have her emperor and his sovereign prerogatives, an Allied declaration that he would become merely their instrument.

Surrender followed — at an instant when carrier planes of the mighty Pacific fleet were a few seconds from their targets in the Tokyo area. Pilots eager for a last lick at a weakening foe were reported to have gotten this word from Adm. William F. Halsey, who wants to ride Hirohito’s white horse through Tokyo streets:

“It looks like the war is over. Cease fighting, but if you see any enemy planes in the air shoot them down in friendly fashion.”

So tonight there was reason for rejoicing. A war-wracked world made the most of it. Three times President Truman had to come out on the White House porch to greet the tremendous crowds — 75,000 people by official estimate — who jammed the streets and parks around the executive mansion.

They jammed so tightly against the iron fence around the White House grounds it looked as if they were coming right on through, despite military police stationed at four foot intervals.

The chief executive spent half an hour dining with his staff. For him there was no personal celebrating, even with close friends.

For days, the national capital had taken surrender reports with complete calm and a generous portion of salt. At 7 p.m., not a minute before or a minute earlier, it gave way to utter abandon.

But across the Potomac in the Pentagon building, nerve center of the Army's winning war, there wasn't any jubilation. There was no one left except a couple of bored public relations officers answering phones.

As the great news became known, hundreds of Washingtonians raced to the White House to join hundreds already massed around the grounds.

Mr. Truman, accompanied by his wife, walked out on the porch and stepped up to a hastily erected microphone. He waved and smiled. Then he spoke:

"Ladies and gentlemen, this is the great day. This is the day we have been looking for since Dec. 7, 1941.

"This is the day when fascism and police government ceases in the world.

"This is the day for the democracies.

"This is the day when we can start up our real task of implementation of free government in the world.

"We are faced with the greatest task we ever have been faced with. The emergency is as great as it was on Dec. 7, 1941.

"It is going to take the help of all of us to do it. I know we are going to do it."

For millions of Americans, for hundreds of millions of Allied people, his surrender announcement signified victory, peace and the eventual return of loved ones from war. To millions who sleep beneath stark white crosses, it meant their sacrifices had not been vain.

Not everyone in the US thinks the bomb was a necessary evil

For further details please check the Nuclear Free Future site

<http://www.nuclearfreefuture.org/events/>

Event

06/13/2015 - 08/16/2015
All Day

Hiroshima-Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Exhibition and Programming <i>The American University Art Museum, Washington DC</i>	07/31/2015 - 08/11/2015 12:00 am - 11:15 am
Fasting Campaign <i>Nuclear Deplyment Site, Büchel</i>	07/31/2015 - 08/09/2015 All Day
Peace Walk for 70th Anniversary of Hiroshima/Nagasaki <i>Santa Barbara to San Luis Obispo, San Luis Obispo CA</i>	08/03/2015 - 08/14/2015 9:30 am - 4:00 pm
Hiroshima/Nagasaki Legacy Exhibit <i>City- County Building, Pittsburgh Pennsylvania</i>	08/04/2015 - 08/06/2015 9:00 am - 8:00 am
Peace Walk from Walnut Creek to Livermore <i>Mt. Diablo Unitarian Universalist Church, Walnut Creek California</i>	08/04/2015 - 08/31/2015 10:00 am - 8:00 pm
Memorial Group Exhibit of Atomic Bombings <i>New Haven Free Public Library Gallery, New Haven Connecticut</i>	08/05/2015 - 08/08/2015 12:00 am
International Fast for Treaty to Ban Nuclear Weapons - KC <i>National Nuclear Security Campus, Kansas City Missouri</i>	08/05/2015 - 08/09/2015 6:30 pm
Hiroshima/Nagasaki events in DC Metro area <i>American U Katzen Center, Washington DC</i>	08/06/2015 - 08/09/2015 All Day
70 Hour Fast <i>East Gate of Livermore Lab, Livermore California</i>	08/06/2015 12:00 am
Float candle boats on the Charles	08/06/2015 - 10/04/2015 12:00 am

*Cambridge Friends Meeting House,
Cambridge MA*

Hiroshima - Nagasaki: 70 Years beyond the Bombings exhibit; Atomic Photographers Exhibit *UMKC Miller-Nichols Library, Kansas City Missouri* 08/06/2015 - 08/09/2015
All Day

Never Again Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Join the action! *On line action, Barcelona* 08/06/2015
12:00 am

Symposium and Joint Statement of Parliamentarians, Mayors and Religious Leaders *Hiroshima, Hiroshima* 08/06/2015
4:30 am - 8:45 pm

Hiroshima/ Nagasaki Commemoration *Church of the Holy Trinity, Toronto Ontario* 08/06/2015
7:00 am - 8:00 pm

Hiroshima Commemorative Vigil *Norwalk City Hall, Norwalk CT* 08/06/2015
7:00 am - 9:00 am

Remembrance of the 70th anniversary of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings *Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, San Luis Obispo California* 08/06/2015
7:45 am - 8:30 am

Vigil to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki *Waltham Common, Waltham MA* 08/06/2015
8:00 am - 10:00 am

70 Years of Nuclear Weapons - At What Cost? *Livermore Nuclear Weapons Lab, Livermore CA* 08/06/2015
8:00 am

August 6 Commemoration of U.S. Atomic Bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki 08/06/2015 - 08/09/2015
All Day

Livermore Laboratory, Livermore California

International Fast to Abolish Nuclear
Weapons, 6-9 August *Paris, France, Paris
France* 08/06/2015 - 08/09/2015
All Day

International Fast to Abolish Nuclear
Weapons, 6-9 August *Paris, France, Paris
France* 08/06/2015
8:15 am - 8:45 am

Hiroshima vigil *flagpole on the New Haven
Green, New Haven CT* 08/06/2015
8:15 am - 8:45 am

Hiroshima vigil *flagpole on the New Haven
Green, New Haven CT* 08/06/2015
8:30 am - 5:00 pm

70 anniversary of the U.S. Nuclear attack on
Japan *Washington Park, Dubuque IA* 08/06/2015 - 10/04/2015
10:00 am - 8:00 pm

Remembering 70th Anniversary of
Hiroshima/Nagasaki Bombing Exhibit
*UMKC Main Campus Library, Kansas City
Missouri* 08/06/2015 - 08/09/2015
10:30 am - 11:15 am

Ceremonies commemorating the 1945
Bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki
Monument to the Fallen, Saintes 08/06/2015 - 08/09/2015
10:30 am - 11:15 am

Ceremonies commemorating the 1945
Bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki
Monument to the Fallen, Saintes 08/06/2015
11:00 am - 1:30 pm

Albany Reading of John Hersey's
"Hiroshima" *Townsend Park, Albany NY* 08/06/2015 - 08/21/2015
11:00 am - 5:00 pm

08/06/2015

Exhibition: Stop worrying and Learn to Love the Bomb? <i>Gayfield Creative Spaces, Edinburgh</i>	11:00 am - 1:00 pm
Meeting with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Togo to his support for nuclear weapon ban <i>Lome, Togo, Lome Togo</i>	08/06/2015 12:00 pm - 2:00 pm
Hiroshima Day Remembrance & Resistance at Lockheed Martin <i>Lockheed Martin, King of Prussia Pennsylvania, Montgomery County</i>	08/06/2015 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm
Syracuse Annual Hiroshima Day Dramatic Procession <i>City Hall Commons, Syracuse, NY NY</i>	08/06/2015 1:00 pm - 2:30 pm
Butoh dance and silent march <i>Constitution square, Santiago</i>	08/06/2015 2:00 pm - 3:30 pm
"Lest we Forget" Panel, University of the South Pacific, Suva - Hiroshima and Nagasaki 70th Anniversary and Pacific anti nuclear history <i>Suva, Fiji Islands, Suva</i>	08/06/2015 - 08/09/2015 All Day
Campaign Nonviolence National Conference and Los Alamos Peace Vigils <i>Los Alamos and Santa Fe, Los Alamos New Mexico</i>	08/06/2015 3:00 pm
Boston Remembers Hiroshima <i>First Church of Boston, Boston MA</i>	08/06/2015 4:00 pm - 5:30 pm
Vigil, Signs & Leaflets <i>Steps of the NY Public Library, Manhattan NY</i>	08/06/2015 4:30 pm - 8:30 pm
	08/06/2015

Ground Zero to Global Zero: Hope after 70 Years *The Church of the Holy Trinity, Toronto* 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm

Schenectady Peace Walk To Commemorate Atomic Bombings *First Reformed Church N. Church St in the Schenectady Stockade, Schenectady NY* 08/06/2015 5:30 pm - 6:30 pm

August 6 Hiroshima 70th Anniversary Observance *Henry Moore Sculpture to Atomic Energy, on the University of Chicago Campus, Hyde Park, Chicago IL* 08/06/2015 5:30 pm - 9:00 pm

Hiroshima: 70 Years *Kaleide Theatre, Melbourne Victoria* 08/06/2015 5:30 pm

Vigil, before Baltimore Hiroshima/Nagasaki Commemoration with Hibakusha Testimonies *33rd St. & North Charles St., Baltimore, Baltimore MD* 08/06/2015 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm

Montclair Peace Vigil 8/6 Anniversary of the Bombing of Hiroshima *Montclair Peace Vigil corner, Montclair NJ* 08/06/2015 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm

70 Years After Hiroshima & Nagasaki: The Ever-Present Nuclear Threat *Japanese American Historical Plaza, Portland OR* 08/06/2015 6:00 pm - 9:00 pm

From Hiroshima to Hope Lantern Lighting Ceremony *Green Lake, Seattle WA* 08/06/2015 6:00 pm - 8:30 pm

Hiroshima Day Lantern Floating *Karlskirche, Vienna* 08/06/2015 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm

08/06/2015

Hiroshima Day screening of *The War Game* 6:30 pm
The Light Euston, Friends House, London

08/06/2015

Baltimore Hiroshima/Nagasaki 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm
Commemoration with Hibakusha
Testimonies *Bufano Sculpture Garden, Johns*
Hopkins Homewood Campus, Baltimore MD

08/06/2015

Hiroshima-Nagasaki at 70: Embrace Peace 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm
/ Nuclear Zero Unitarian Universalist
Church of the Lehigh Valley, Bethlehem PA

Date/Time

Peace Lantern Floating Ceremony
Remembering the 70th Anniversary of the
Bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki *East*
Picnic Shelter Silver Lake, Rochester MN

1 2 3 >

Fears of pacifism eroding

August 6, 2015

Hiroshima marks 70th A-bomb anniversary amid fears of pacifism eroding

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2015/08/06/national/history/abe-mum-contentious-sdf-role-boost-hiroshima-marks-70th-bomb-anniversary/#.VcRzSvnwmos>

by Tomohiro Osaki
Staff Writer

HIROSHIMA – Japan commemorated the 70th anniversary of the U.S. atomic bombing of Hiroshima on Thursday with renewed determination to abolish nuclear weapons and pursue world peace, although many people said Prime Minister Shinzo Abe’s drive to expand the country’s military role weakened such pledges.

Global interest in the anniversary appeared particularly high this year.

The annual ceremony at Hiroshima's Peace Memorial Park drew foreign ambassadors and dignitaries from a record 100 countries, including the nuclear armed United States, United Kingdom, Russia and France.

The U.S. sent Ambassador Caroline Kennedy for the second consecutive year and Rose Gottemoeller, undersecretary of state for arms control and international security, for the first time.

After observing a moment of silence to mourn the dead, Abe reaffirmed Japan's pledge to fulfill its responsibility, as the world's only victim of nuclear warfare, to "eliminate nuclear weapons from the world."

But in a break from tradition, the prime minister made no allusion to Japan's three nonnuclear principles, which declare the nation's nonpossession, nonproduction and nonintroduction of nuclear weapons. Nor did he touch on his government's security bills that opponents — including atomic bomb survivors — say undermine the nation's pacifist postwar Constitution.

Abe said it was "disappointing" that global leaders were unable to reach a consensus on a final declaration during the ninth Review Conference of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty in May. Japan will submit a fresh resolution on the abolition of atomic weapons to the United Nations General Assembly in the fall, he said.

In the annual peace declaration, Hiroshima Mayor Kazumi Matsui joined Abe in calling for the abolition of nuclear arms and decried the world's continued pursuit of such weapons.

"Policymakers in the nuclear-armed states remain trapped in provincial thinking, repeating by word and deed their nuclear intimidation," Matsui said.

"People of the world, please listen carefully to the words of the hibakusha and, profoundly accepting the spirit of Hiroshima, contemplate the nuclear problem as your own," he said.

With Japan slated to host next year's Group of Seven summit, and a foreign ministerial meeting in Hiroshima prior to that event, the mayor urged U.S. President Barack Obama and other global policymakers to come to visit his city and learn first-hand about the destruction caused by the atomic bomb.

The 70th anniversary of the atomic bombing came at a time when the Abe government is pushing security bills through the Diet that would enable the Self-Defense Forces to battle alongside Japan's allies to protect them from aggression.

In testament to growing public dissatisfaction with the government's heavy-handed push, angry shouts erupted from the crowd as Abe left the stage, in what sounded like criticism of the defense policy shift. A group of protesters held a march through the park after the ceremony to oppose the bills, which they called "pro-war."

Although refraining from directly criticizing the bills, Mayor Matsui said he believes "broadly versatile security systems that do not depend on military might" and continued promotion of the "pacifism of the Japanese Constitution" are vital to abolish nuclear weapons.

Junichi Sato, executive director of Greenpeace Japan, warned that the country's long-standing pursuit of pacifism is now on the verge of collapse.

"Sadly, we are seeing this tradition in Japan being eroded by the Abe government as it begins to dismantle the so-called peace Constitution and doggedly pursue nuclear power at the expense of clean, safe renewables," Sato said in a statement released Thursday.

This view was echoed by 41-year-old Hiroshima native Kazuya Ishikawa, who was among those who came to the park to offer a prayer.

"To be honest, I don't know how Abe dared to attend the ceremony this year," he said. "It just doesn't feel right that the very person who is pushing for the bills is attending the event."

Although Abe disputes claims that the bills will pave the way for Japan to wage war and stresses they are instead designed to help bolster the nation's defense capabilities, the fact nonetheless remains, Ishikawa said, that many members of the public are worried about the potential implications.

"The government needs to be accountable," he said.

Meanwhile, an 87-year-old hibakusha who declined to give his name, said visiting the ceremony has always brought him sadness as he ruminates over the death of his parents, who still remain unaccounted for.

"War should never be repeated. It's essentially the act of human beings killing each other," he said.

Major protest at US warheads facilities

For immediate release, August 6, 2015

HISTORIC 70TH ANNIVERSARY OF ATOMIC BOMBING OF HIROSHIMA, NAGASAKI:

Major Protests at U.S. Warhead Facilities Across the Nation Unite to Decry Trillion Dollar Plan for New U.S. Nuclear Weapons; Advocate Disarmament

<http://static1.1.sqspcdn.com/static/f/356082/26442884/1438823432073/8+6+15+Hiroshima-Nagasaki+commemorations+and+actions.pdf?token=G4%2FO%2B8ws1urtRLH0RKnfFiBbzcOY%3D>

A thousand or more peace advocates, Hibakusha (A-bomb survivors), religious leaders, scientists, economists, attorneys, doctors and nurses, nuclear analysts, former war planners and others across the country are coming together to commemorate the 70th Anniversary of the U.S. atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki this August 6 through 9 at key sites in the U.S. nuclear weapons complex and beyond.

Major commemorations, rallies, protests and/or nonviolent direct actions will place at the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in CA, the Los Alamos National Laboratory in NM, the Kansas City Plant in MO, the Y-12 Plant in TN, the Rocky Flats Plant in CO, the Pantex Plant in TX, and in GA near the Savannah River Site

These events are united by their reflection on the past, and, uniquely, their focus on the present and future with a resolute determination to change U.S. nuclear weapons policy at the very locations that are linchpins in producing the new trillion dollar stockpile of nuclear weapons and their delivery vehicles.

"We stand on the brink of a new, global nuclear arms race," noted Ralph Hutchison, the longstanding coordinator for the Oak Ridge Environmental Peace Alliance. "This is epitomized by government plans for a new Uranium Processing Facility to produce H-bomb components at Y-12, including for new-design weapons." [...]

A-bomb survivors opposed to nukes

August 5, 2015

A-bomb survivors speak out against nuclear power, decry Abe's view of war

by Linda Sieg

Reuters

FUKUSHIMA – When Atsushi Hoshino set out to revive a group representing atomic bomb survivors in the Fukushima Prefecture 30 years ago, one topic was taboo — criticizing the nuclear power industry upon which many relied for jobs.

That changed dramatically after March 11, 2011, when a massive tsunami devastated the Fukushima No. 1 nuclear plant, triggering meltdowns, spewing radiation and forcing tens of thousands of residents to flee their homes.

“Until then . . . I felt somewhat uncomfortable about nuclear power, but not enough to oppose it. Rather, I was in a situation where it wasn’t possible to oppose it,” Hoshino, 87, told reporters at his home in the city of Fukushima, about 60 km from the wrecked Fukushima No. 1 plant, the country’s first commercial nuclear plant when it went online in 1971.

Now, Hoshino, a survivor of the Aug. 6, 1945, U.S. atomic bombing of Hiroshima, is among the majority of Japanese who oppose Prime Minister Shinzo Abe’s plan to reboot reactors that were shut down after the Fukushima disaster. Kyushu Electric Power Co.’s Sendai plant in southwestern Japan is expected to resume operations on Aug. 10, the first to do so in nearly two years.

“I think that since the risk of nuclear power and the fact that human beings cannot control it has become clear, none of the reactors should be restarted,” Hoshino said.

Akira Yamada, chairman of Fukushima’s atomic bomb survivors group, says he reached a similar conclusion. Still, both men are wary of comparing the risks of nuclear power to the horror of atomic weapons.

“There is a difference between military use and peaceful use,” said Yamada, who like Hoshino became a professor at Fukushima University after the war and later served as its president.

Seventy years after the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings, the experiences of the elderly survivors remain seared in their memories.

Hoshino was a high school student deployed to a munitions factory when a U.S. bomber dropped an atomic bomb on Hiroshima, killing nearly 140,000 people by the end of the year. Three days later, a second atomic bomb was dropped on Nagasaki.

On Aug. 15, Japan surrendered.

For Hoshino, who had been out of the city but returned to search for missing classmates, one of his starkest memories is of finding two friends, one seemingly unhurt but unconscious, the other barely alive with his entire body — including nose, lips, and eyes — burned and blackened like charcoal.

The first died in a truck en route to their dorm. The other was alive, but his body was already infested with maggots, which Hoshino removed with tweezers, until that friend died, too.

“Even now, I cannot forget the appearance of those friends who were victims of the atomic bombing,” he said.

Nagasaki survivor Yoshiteru Kohata, 86, who returned to his birthplace in Fukushima a few years after the war's end, says he long tried to forget the days after the bombing, when he helped the injured, and carried corpses up to the mountains for burial.

Recounting his experiences, such as hearing a young woman screaming "Please stop, Please stop," as an army doctor operated on her wounds without anaesthetic, still distresses him.

"Even now, when I tell the story, tears well up and my chest gets tight," added Kohata, a retired schoolteacher.

Yamada, 89, who was at home 2½ km from the center of the explosion when the bomb fell on Hiroshima, filling the sky with black clouds and red flames, says he knew early on that Japan was doomed to lose the war.

While Yamada was in middle school, his cousin, one year older, decided to apply to Yokaren, an Imperial Navy pilot school that ultimately trained many of the "kamikaze" pilots who flew suicide missions in the final months of the conflict.

"I told him, 'Give it up. Japan cannot win this war,' " Yamada said.

His cousin joined anyway and in February 1945 came to say farewell. " 'We have no gasoline. We have no planes. All I can do is die. You stay alive and work for Japan,' " Yamada quoted his cousin as saying.

Two months after Japan's surrender, the family was notified that his cousin had died in the bloody battle of Iwo Jima.

Kohata said he, too, might have flown to his death had an army colonel not told him to stay in school and train as a pilot. "There were many who died at the age of 16," he said.

Like many "hibakusha" survivors, Yamada, Hoshino and Kohata are harsh critics of Abe, whose conservative agenda includes easing the constraints of Japan's pacifist, postwar constitution on the military and adopting a less apologetic tone over the war.

Abe is set to mark the 70th anniversary of the war's end with a statement that some fear will dilute past apologies.

"If you delve into the atomic bombings which had such inhumane results, it was because we fought that . . . war of aggression," Yamada said, calling Japan's wartime leaders "murderers."

"But Mr. Abe is not delving deeply."

Hoshino was even blunter. "I don't think Shinzo Abe . . . truly recognizes that the war was a criminal war of aggression."

Hiroshima "beacon of hope"

August 6, 2015

VOX POPULI: Hiroshima permanent beacon of hope for nuclear-free world

<http://ajw.asahi.com/article/views/vox/AJ201508060040>

Vox Populi, Vox Dei is a daily column that runs on Page 1 of the Asahi Shimbun.

One summer, a boy was playing by himself on the stone steps of his family's warehouse. When he noticed ants swarming toward him, he began squashing them with his fingers, one after another. He became

totally engrossed. At dusk, he saw hallucinations of a river of scarlet flames flowing before him while bizarre creatures gazed at him in the semi-darkness.

The aforementioned is a summary of a passage from the novel "Shingan no Kuni" (The land of heart's desire) by Tamiki Hara (1905-1951), who became a Hiroshima "hibakusha" (A-bomb survivor) on Aug. 6 exactly 70 years ago.

Hara wrote that these images of hell the boy hallucinated were perhaps a preview of the "real hell" he would be forced to see years later.

Hara's depiction of an innocent child at play suggests the utter inhumanity of the nuclear attack in which people were treated as if they were no different from ants.

Having miraculously cheated death, Hara jotted down in his notebook as he surveyed the city of Hiroshima, which had been reduced to rubble, "I am probably being ordered by heaven to stay alive and tell others about this disaster."

He must have resolved, there and then, to help keep memories of the nuclear devastation alive for posterity. "Natsu no Hana" (Summer Flowers), his best-known work, was born from the jottings he made in that notebook.

But relaying the memories from generation to generation becomes less certain over time. According to a recent survey of hibakusha by The Asahi Shimbun, more than 50 percent of respondents said their atomic bomb experiences "have not been conveyed at all" or "have not been conveyed enough" to the next generations. In other words, those who thought their stories were being passed on formed only a minority.

Against this backdrop, Hara's notebook, together with materials belonging to other hibakusha novelists, was recently proposed for inclusion in UNESCO's Memory of the World Register.

I pray they will make the register, so that the horrific consequences of nuclear war will become part of the shared understanding of the global community.

Hara also wrote a good number of poems. "Towa no Midori" (Eternal green), which was meant as his message for the people of Hiroshima, appears to encourage them not to give up hope. It goes as follows: "Let young new leaves swirl ... let green leaves drip."

While we keep alive the "memories of death and flames" depicted by Hara, we must also keep alive the hope he held in his heart.

--The Asahi Shimbun, Aug. 6

* * *

Vox Populi, Vox Dei is a popular daily column that takes up a wide range of topics, including culture, arts and social trends and developments. Written by veteran Asahi Shimbun writers, the column provides useful perspectives on and insights into contemporary Japan and its culture.

Video of nuclear terror projected on Nagasaki cathedral

August 7, 2015

Video: Story of atomic terror, revival projected onto facade of Nagasaki cathedral

<http://mainichi.jp/english/english/newsselect/news/20150807p2a00m0na007000c.html>



[Click to enlarge](#)

NAGASAKI -- On the night of Aug. 6, a story of life, destruction and revival from the atomic ashes played out on the facade of Urakami Cathedral here.

The story is told in the form of a 10-minute CG video projected onto the wall of the cathedral, portraying the Nagasaki landmark before the atomic attack of Aug. 9, 1945, its destruction by the blast wave, and finally its reconstruction. (Mainichi)
Scroll down to see the video.

Video projected on Nagasaki cathedral tells of phoenix-like rise from ashes of A-bomb

http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/social_affairs/AJ201508070064

August 07, 2015

THE ASAHI SHIMBUN

NAGASAKI--Nagasaki's venerated Urakami Cathedral told a tale of its destruction and rebirth on Aug. 6 through a computer-generated video projected on its facade.

The original Roman Catholic church was erected in 1925, but was destroyed when the U.S. military dropped an atomic bomb on the city on Aug. 9, 1945. The cathedral was rebuilt in 1959 and has been declared a national treasure.

Organized by young artists and students, the video includes scenes of Christians stacking bricks to build the original church, the majesty of the building's architecture--often referred to as "the greatest cathedral in the East," the flash of the atomic bomb, the church crumbling in flames and its reconstruction.

"I was deeply moved to see the old cathedral for the first time because I don't remember it," said Suiko Takagi, a 72-year-old resident of the area.

The video is scheduled to be screened again on the evening of Aug. 8.

"A red string of fate"

August 7, 2015

Grandson of crew member of both B-29s that dropped A-bombs interviews survivors in Japan

http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/people/AJ201508070009

By RIE YAMADA/ Staff Writer

A twist of fate has led **the grandson of the only U.S. crew member aboard both the B-29s that dropped atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki** in 1945 to Japan to meet survivors of those horrific blasts.

Ari Beser, a 27-year-old visual artist, said a "red string of fate" brought him to both cities to talk to hibakusha, or atomic bomb survivors, citing a Japanese legend that says everyone destined to meet has an invisible thread tied to that person.

Beser is working on a project to highlight hibakusha in the two A-bombed cities and those impacted by the 2011 Fukushima No. 1 nuclear power plant accident.

A winner of the Fulbright-National Geographic Digital Storytelling Grant, Beser will be in Japan until April 2016. His photos, videos and stories will be published in the digital edition of National Geographic.

Beser's paternal grandfather, Jacob Beser, had told about his experiences serving as a crew member aboard both B-29s in a book and on TV before his death in 1992 at age 71.

His grandfather had no regrets about dropping the bombs, but believed nuclear weapons should never be used again, Beser said.

His grandfather on his mother's side was friends with a hibakusha woman from Hiroshima, who has since passed away. Four years ago, Beser met a relative of the friend.

"I (initially) thought I was going to write a book about my grandfather's friend and my grandfather. I thought the book would be her story and his history," he said.

The bereaved relative said to Beser, "If you want to understand the reality of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, you have to meet survivors, especially now, before it's too late."

He visited Hiroshima and Nagasaki that summer and met hibakusha.

The A-bomb survivors told him that they "wanted to share their experiences with Americans to help build support for a world without nuclear weapons," Beser recalled.

He decided to help spread that desire to the world.

Two years ago, he participated in a project by the Japan-based NGO Peace Boat with hibakusha, who shared their experiences on around-the-world voyages.

Among the participants on the voyage was a student from Fukushima Prefecture who said she was unable to return home due to the Fukushima accident.

"I am afraid that people will forget about the accident, and a similar accident might occur again," Beser quoted her as saying.

Her concerns overlap those of hibakusha.

Beser was born and raised in a Maryland town about a 90-minute drive from the site of the Three Mile Island nuclear plant accident, which occurred in 1979 in neighboring Pennsylvania. One of the plant's reactors suffered a partial meltdown in the accident.

He believes his grandfather may have been exposed to radiation because he was working with the experimentation of atomic bombs at the Los Alamos National Laboratory in Los Alamos, N.M.

"I would like to highlight the humanitarian effects of nuclear technology" as seen from the eyes of hibakusha, Beser said.

Susan Southard's book on postwar Nagasaki

August 7, 2015

U.S. journalist describes postwar agony of Nagasaki A-bomb survivors in book

http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/social_affairs/AJ201508070031

By SHOKO RIKIMARU/ Staff Writer

NAGASAKI--A U.S. journalist has published a book about the long-term suffering of atomic bomb survivors in Nagasaki in the hope it will strike a chord with her fellow Americans.

Susan Southard wrote "Nagasaki: Life After Nuclear War" to help U.S. citizens understand how hibakusha (atomic bomb survivors) have continued to suffer since that fateful day of Aug. 9, 1945.

Her book focuses on the long-lasting effects on survivors to counter the feelings of many U.S. citizens who believe the atomic bombings of Nagasaki and Hiroshima simply ended World War II and that was it.

"My hope is that the survivors' experiences over the past 70 years will be read and understood by many Americans and that this understanding will help shape public discussion about the atomic bombings, which are two of the most controversial wartime acts in history," Southard said.

The book, published last month, is based on the firsthand accounts of five people that survived the destruction that occurred 70 years ago.

Southard visited Nagasaki five times between 2003 and 2011 to conduct research. She learned about the lingering effects of radiation that affected the survivors and the subsequent health concerns they had for their children and grandchildren, as well as things such as the discrimination that hibakusha faced in getting married.

Southard, from Arizona, visited Nagasaki for the first time when she was in Japan as a high school exchange student. She said she was overwhelmed to learn of the damage and suffering that were caused by the atomic bomb.

She said the most enduring moment she had with a hibakusha was in 1986 when she served as an interpreter for Sumiteru Taniguchi, an 86-year-old man who lived through the atomic bombing of Nagasaki. He was visiting Washington to deliver a lecture.

She talked to Taniguchi and came to understand she was talking to a man who was still suffering from the effects of the bombing even decades after the devastating event.

Southard decided to write a book focusing on survivors of the atomic bombing of Nagasaki.

She heard firsthand accounts of the destruction from five people including Taniguchi and also examined letters and diaries. Two of the five people who gave their accounts to Southard have since passed away.

My God, what have we done?

August 6, 2015

70 years on, how the Enola Gay mission changed WWII

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2015/08/06/national/history/70-years-enola-gay-mission-changed-wwii/#.VcR0JPnwmos>

AFP-JIJI, Kyodo

WASHINGTON – The Enola Gay was on its long flight back to its Pacific island base when the co-pilot, Capt. Robert Lewis, opened his log and scribbled down the many questions racing through his mind.

"Just how many Japs did we kill?" wondered Lewis after the dazzling silver B-29 bomber dropped the first atomic bomb over Hiroshima — and, in doing so, altered the course of history forever.

"I honestly have the feeling of groping for words to explain this. . . . My God, what have we done?" he added in the cursive lettering of the day.

"After a few last looks (at the mushroom cloud), I honestly feel the Japs may give up before we land at Tinian," where the Enola Gay was stationed, he said.

"They certainly don't care to have us drop any more bombs of atomic energy like this."

Meanwhile, the grandson of Brig. Gen. Paul Tibbets, who piloted the Enola Gay that dropped the Little Boy atomic bomb on Hiroshima on Aug. 6, 1945, said his grandfather had been committed to the orders of the U.S. president at the time.

"My grandfather was always very clear that he was carrying out the orders of the president of the United States and he did so to the best of his ability," the grandson, also Brig. Gen. Paul Tibbets, said in a written interview.

Tibbets said his grandfather knew that such missions "had the real possibility of bringing World War II to an end, saving a substantial number of lives on both sides, and getting Americans home to their families." But Tibbets' grandfather wrote in his memoir, "It is my fervent hope that my country will never again be summoned to use nuclear force."

It would be another 27 days— plus a second nuclear mushroom over Nagasaki — before Japan formalized its surrender on Sept. 2, ending a war that began with its 1937 invasion of China and stretched across the Asia-Pacific region.

Using the atomic bomb, developed amid utmost secrecy, was hugely popular with war-weary Americans at the time — and 70 years on, a majority today still think it was the right thing to do.

Fifty-six percent of Americans surveyed by the Pew Research Center in February said using the atomic bomb on Japanese cities was justified, compared to 79 percent of Japanese respondents who said it was not.

Were it not for the atomic bomb, many Americans contend, thousands, perhaps hundreds of thousands, maybe millions of American soldiers would have died in a U.S.-led invasion of the Japanese mainland.

At the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum's vast public collection of historic aircraft near Dulles airport outside Washington, every display gets a succinct 150-word description, including the Enola Gay.

"It's hard to miss in the vastness of the Udvar-Hazy Center, sharing hanger space with dozens of others planes, including an Air France Concorde, the original Boeing 707 prototype and the Space Shuttle Discovery.

"On August 6, 1945, this Martin-built B-29-45-MO dropped the first atomic weapon used in combat on Hiroshima, Japan," its plaque simply notes, with no mention of the death or destruction it sowed.

Twenty years ago, during its restoration, Enola Gay found itself at the center of a firestorm between World War II veterans and a younger generation of historians who questioned the use of "The Bomb."

Veterans and their supporters in Congress alleged that a 50th anniversary exhibition — with the polished front section of Enola Gay as its star attraction — depicted the wartime Japanese "more as victims, not aggressors," wrote John Correll of the Air Force Association.

"A package of lies," Brig. Gen. Paul Tibbets, Enola Gay's commander, said at the time. "Many are second-guessing the decision to use the atomic weapons. To them I would say: Stop!"

Stunned by the backlash, the Smithsonian reconceived its planned exhibition, titled "The Crossroads: The End of World War II, the Atomic Bomb and the Cold War" at least five times, before it opened in 1995 for a two-year run that drew 4 million visitors.

By then, the exhibition had been stripped down to a straightforward recounting of the Enola Gay and its historic mission, minus any discussion of the merits or morality of the use of atomic weapons.

“We don’t celebrate this artifact as much as we have it here to display,” Jeremy Kinney, the Smithsonian’s curator of vintage U.S. warplanes, told AFP on the footbridge that passes Enola Gay at cockpit level. “We try to interpret it as much as we can, and then allow people to interpret it themselves as well. At least that’s my take on it, as a curator.”

Fewer than 855,000 American veterans of World War II are alive today, out of 16 million who served in uniform, and they are fading away at a rate of nearly 500 a day, the National World War II Museum in New Orleans says.

Their dwindling numbers could explain that lack of any furor over an exhibition at American University Museum in Washington of 20 artifacts that survived the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings — objects that were supposed to be part of the 1995 Smithsonian show.

On loan from museums in the two Japanese cities, they include a pupil’s scorched uniform, another student’s carbonized lunch box and a replica of a pocket watch that stopped at 8:15 — a replica, because the original is too frail to travel.

“I haven’t seen any criticism, really,” said Peter Kuznick, an American University history professor and director of its Nuclear Studies Institute who leads annual student trips to Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Since 1945, he said, a trove of once-classified documents indicates that top U.S. commanders considered the atomic bomb “(militarily) unnecessary, morally reprehensible or both,” Kuznick said.

Then-president Harry Truman “probably hoped it would speed up a surrender before the Soviets got into the war,” and Truman was “obsessed with U.S.-Soviet relations,” he said.

Russian releases on-site report on bombings

August 6, 2015

Russia releases Soviet Embassy’s on-the-ground report from Hiroshima and Nagasaki

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2015/08/06/national/history/russia-releases-soviet-embassys-ground-report-hiroshima-nagasaki/>

Kyodo

MOSCOW – The Russian Foreign Ministry has released an on-site report on the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki conducted by a team sent by the Soviet Embassy in Tokyo in September 1945. The Soviet Union was keenly interested in the effects of the new type of weapon.

Studies by experts have also found that the Soviet Union dispatched investigators to the cities just days after the bombings that August, even before U.S. experts got there.

This new report, unveiled Wednesday, was prepared by the embassy and sent to Soviet leader Josef Stalin after a team of three people, including a military attache, visited Hiroshima on Sept. 14, 1945. The city was bombed Aug. 6.

Several days later, the team moved on to Nagasaki, which had been bombed Aug. 9.

The report notes that it was raining heavily on the day the team arrived in Hiroshima. The train station and the town were obliterated with no cover against the rain, it says. Citing witnesses to the blast, the report says a huge explosion followed a flare-up, and many people were subsequently burned to death. On the radioactive impact on humans, the report, quoting a doctor named Fukuhara, says that some people saw their white blood cell count plummet and bled from the nose and eyes, with their body temperature rising to around 40 degrees. They died three to four days after exposure, it says. In Nagasaki, the team noted that there were no survivors in areas around ground zero and quoted a witness as saying that a child who had climbed a tree and was covered by thick layers of leaves did not die, while a child nearby on the ground did die.

Please try again M. Abe

August 7, 2015

Abe to mention nonnuclear principles in Nagasaki speech after Hiroshima flak

<http://ajw.asahi.com/article/views/editorial/AJ201508070021>

Kyodo, Jiji

HIROSHIMA – Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said Friday he will include a pledge to observe the nation's three nonnuclear principles in his upcoming memorial speech to remember the atomic bombing attack in Nagasaki, after failing to do so in Hiroshima on Thursday.

During a session of the Lower House's Budget Committee, the prime minister emphasized that Japan's principles of not possessing, producing or permitting nuclear weapons on Japanese territory remain unchanged.

"Maintaining the three nonnuclear principles is a matter of course," he told the committee. "Our national policy remains unchanged."

His failure to mention the long-standing policy in his memorial speech in Hiroshima on Thursday drew flak from opposition members.

"He couldn't have omitted (the principles) by accident," Democratic Party of Japan Secretary-General Yukio Edano told a party meeting on Friday.

Meanwhile, seven groups of atomic bomb survivors, or hibakusha, in Hiroshima urged Abe on Thursday to withdraw government-sponsored security bills under discussion at the Diet.

At a meeting with Abe in the western Japanese city, representatives of the groups said that the bills are clearly unconstitutional.

Abe said the bills will help prevent conflicts from occurring, contributing to Japan's efforts to keep its pledge never to fight another war. He also said the country needs the legislation in order to maintain peace for the Japanese people.

However, Yukio Yoshioka, 86, chief of a liaison council of hibakusha groups in Hiroshima, said, "We must not repeat our mistakes and make Japan a country where those killed in the atomic bombings cannot rest in peace."

The meeting between Abe and the seven hibakusha groups followed a ceremony to mark the 70th anniversary of the U.S. atomic bombing of Hiroshima in the morning.

Japan's pledge not to fight a war and its policy of pursuing peace will remain intact, Abe said, adding that he will try to explain more clearly why the bills are needed and will heed public opinion.

After the meeting, Yoshioka said that he was disgusted with Abe, who only talked about what sounds palatable on the surface.

"The government's current attitude is trampling hibakusha's wishes and feelings," he added.

Sunao Tsuboi, 90, head of the Hiroshima Prefectural Confederation of Atomic Bomb Sufferers organizations, said that war-renouncing Article 9 of the Constitution lies at the core of Japan, calling on Abe to listen to the voices of people.

Remorse of US pilot

August 8, 2015

B-29 pilot asked pope to support Nagasaki atomic bomb victims

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2015/08/08/national/b-29-pilot-asked-pope-support-nagasaki-atomic-bomb-victims/#.VcXhQfnwmos>

Kyodo

QUINCY, MASSACHUSETTS – The pilot of the U.S. plane that dropped the atomic bomb on Nagasaki on Aug. 9, 1945, asked Pope John XXIII privately in the early 1960s to offer support to the city, relatives of the pilot have told Kyodo News.

Charles Sweeney, a devout Catholic who piloted the B-29 Bockscar in the attack, also made donations to a Catholic-affiliated orphanage in Nagasaki due to his concern for war orphans after visiting the city in September 1945, Sweeney's daughter and brother told Kyodo News ahead of Sunday's 70th anniversary of the bombing.

Before his death in 2004, Sweeney consistently claimed that the atomic bombing was necessary, as it brought World War II to an end.

But his actions, such as making the donations to the orphans, show that he "felt sorry for them deep inside his heart," said Anri Morimoto, a professor at the International Christian University who specializes in religion and ethics.

Sweeney visited the Vatican with his wife around 1962 and asked John, who reigned from 1958 to 1963, for additional support for the Urakami Cathedral in Nagasaki, which was reconstructed after being destroyed in the nuclear blast, according to Sweeney's second-youngest daughter, Marylyn Howe, 67. John is known for his efforts that helped the United States and the Soviet Union avert a nuclear war during the Cuban Missile Crisis in October 1962. The following year, he released "Pacem in terris," in which he appealed for the banning of nuclear weapons.

A public relations official at the Vatican said it was difficult to confirm the meeting through official documents.

Howe, who said she often talked about the orphans in Nagasaki with her father between the late 1950s and early 1960s, said Sweeney made the donations to the cathedral because he wished for its reconstruction.

Sweeney's younger brother, William, 74, said Sweeney was willing to send money to a Catholic facility in Nagasaki every year because there had been many casualties there.

Confirming the donations, however, is difficult due to incomplete records and because they were often made anonymously, people close to the church and Nagasaki said.

Sweeney also visited an orphanage near Hiroshima, the first city to be devastated by a U.S. atomic bomb, between November and December 1989 and gave donations via check.

Preserving Hiroshima Dome

August 8, 2015

A-bombed structures to be preserved using health ministry subsidies

http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/social_affairs/AJ201508080031



The Atomic Bomb Dome in Hiroshima (Asahi Shimbun file photo)

By ANANDA KOKUMAI/ Staff Writer

HIROSHIMA--Hiroshima and Nagasaki are to get central government funding to preserve structures damaged by the 1945 atomic bombings so as to remind future generations of the "inhumanity of nuclear weapons."

Funds will be made available by the health ministry's financial assistance program for memorials to atomic bomb victims in the two cities that were leveled 70 years ago this month.

The decision was made because the number of people who experienced the disasters firsthand is waning and the government does not want future generations to have nothing to remind them of the tragedies. It will be the first time that the central government has provided full-fledged financial support to repair structures, mainly buildings and bridges, damaged by the atomic bombings and from subsequent aging. The Hiroshima city government is registering structures at 86 locations within a radius of five kilometers from ground zero as those damaged by atomic bombings. If those structures receive subsidies from the ministry, the city government's financial burden for repairs will be drastically reduced. It will also become possible for the city government to increase financial assistance to organizations or individuals that possess or manage those structures. At present, the city government is offering 75 percent of the repair costs with the upper limit set at 30 million yen (about \$241,500). The city government started offering financial assistance for the preservation of those structures in fiscal 1993. Since then, it granted a total of about 220 million yen to 22 projects up until fiscal 2014. However, the owners of some structures have decided to dismantle them because the financial burden to maintain them is so high. So far, structures in 17 locations have been torn down. Meanwhile, the Nagasaki city government is registering structures at 53 locations for preservation. Just like Hiroshima, Nagasaki is also providing subsidies to organizations or individuals in the private sector.

"The principles of peace have become shaky"

August 09, 2015

Mayor, hibakusha lash out at security legislation at Nagasaki memorial ceremony

http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/social_affairs/AJ201508090015

THE ASAHI SHIMBUN

NAGASAKI--Nagasaki Mayor Tomihisa Taue and 86-year-old atomic bomb survivor Sumiteru Taniguchi both criticized proposed security legislation they fear could move Japan from a peace-loving nation toward a war footing.

Both expressed their concerns in their speeches at a peace memorial ceremony held here on Aug. 9, which marked the 70th anniversary of the atomic bombing of the city in 1945.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, another speaker, touched on the three non-nuclear principles, which he had not included in his speech at the memorial ceremony in Hiroshima on Aug. 6. In Nagasaki, Abe said the government will make efforts for nuclear disarmament toward the realization of a nuclear-free world while firmly maintaining the non-nuclear principles.

At this year's ceremony in Nagasaki Peace Park, ambassadors and other officials from a record 75 countries participated, according to the Nagasaki city government.

About 6,700 people attended the ceremony to mourn atomic bomb victims and seek the abolition of nuclear weapons. A moment of silence was observed at 11:02 a.m., the exact time the bomb was detonated over the city 70 years ago, killing some 74,000 people.

In the city's Peace Declaration, Taue emphasized the necessity of passing on the memories of the atomic bombing and the war to the next generation.

"As generations that were born after the war constitute the majority of the people, memories of the war are waning rapidly from our society," he said. "We must not forget not only the experiences of the atomic bombings of Nagasaki and Hiroshima, but also memories of air raids that destroyed Tokyo and many other cities, the Battle of Okinawa and disastrous wars that plagued many people in Asia. As 70 years have passed (after the end of the war), what we need to do is to pass on those memories (to future generations)."

Taue expressed strong expectations for these younger generations.

"Please do not disregard (the atomic bombings and the war) as stories of the past. Please firmly accept the wishes for peace. We are trying to convey the memories (of those disasters) because they could befall you in the future."

As for security legislation now before the Upper House, which would greatly expand the role of the Self-Defense Forces overseas, Taue called on the government and the Diet to conduct careful deliberations.

"Anxiety and concern are spreading that the pledge carved into our minds 70 years ago and the principles of peace of the Japanese Constitution have become shaky," he said. "I demand that the government and the Diet listen to these voices of anxiety and concern and conduct careful and sincere deliberations by bringing together people's wisdom."

Taue also urged the government to develop a national security strategy that does not rely on nuclear deterrence.

"As researchers in many countries, such as the United States, Japan, South Korea and China, have proposed, such a policy can be implemented by establishing a nuclear weapons-free zone in Northeast Asia," he said. "Do consider a shift from 'nuclear umbrella' to 'non-nuclear umbrella' for the sake of our future."

Representing hibakusha atomic bomb survivors, Taniguchi, chairman of the Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Survivors Council, read the "pledge for peace" at the ceremony.

When he was 16 years old, he suffered burns on his back from the atomic bomb and drifted between life and death at a hospital for a year and nine months. Based on his experiences, he spoke about the sufferings of atomic bomb survivors.

In his speech, Taniguchi also harshly criticized the proposed security legislation.

"After the war, the Constitution was enacted in which Japan promised to the world that it would never wage war or take up weapons again. However, the government is about to bring Japan back to the wartime period by enforcing the approval for exercising the right to collective self-defense and by pushing ahead with amending the Constitution," he said.

"The national security legislation being advanced by the government will lead Japan to war. It will overturn from the foundation the movements and thoughts toward abolition of nuclear weapons, which have been built up by many people seeking peace, including hibakusha. We can never tolerate it."

Abe also made a speech that was notable for the inclusion of the three non-nuclear principles that Japan will not possess or produce nuclear weapons and will not allow them to be brought into the country.

In a similar ceremony held in Hiroshima on Aug. 6, Abe did not make reference to the non-nuclear principles, which had been mentioned by prime ministers, including himself, in recent years. Abe has faced sharp criticism from atomic bomb survivors and opposition lawmakers for the omission.

"I realize anew the preciousness of peace when I watch the city of Nagasaki that has achieved such a reconstruction to this day," Abe said. "I made my determination anew that, as the only country in the world that suffered atomic bombings in a war, Japan will lead efforts in the international community for

nuclear disarmament toward the realization of a 'world without nuclear weapons' while firmly maintaining the three non-nuclear principles."

For ever "conveying the inhumanity of nuclear weapons"

August 9, 2015

Nagasaki bombing remembered, but doubts emerge over anti-war, anti-nuke policy

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2015/08/09/national/nagasaki-mayor-atomic-bomb-survivors-caution-security-bills-70th-anniversary-bombing/#.VccbrPnwmos>

AFP-JIJI, Kyodo

NAGASAKI – Japan on Sunday marked the 70th anniversary of the atomic bombing of Nagasaki that claimed more than 74,000 lives almost instantly, in one of the final chapters of World War II.

Bells tolled and tens of thousands of people, including aging survivors and the relatives of victims, observed a minute's silence at 11:02 a.m., the exact moment the blast devastated the port city on Aug. 9, 1945.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe laid a wreath of flowers, with representatives from 75 countries, including U.S. Ambassador Caroline Kennedy, attending the ceremony.

"As the only country attacked with an atomic bomb in war, I am renewing our determination to lead the global effort of nuclear disarmament, to create a world without such weapons," Abe said in his speech. Abe also said the country would continue to abide by its long-held non-nuclear principles: not producing, possessing or allowing nuclear weapons on Japanese territory.

He was criticized for failing to mention the three principles at a ceremony days earlier in Hiroshima, alarming atomic bomb survivors, particularly at a time when the nationalist leader is trying to push through legislation to expand the role of the Self-Defense Forces.

Their concerns heightened when Defense Minister Gen Nakatani said Wednesday the legislation would theoretically allow Japan to transport nuclear weapons as part of its logistical support for foreign countries.

Nagasaki Mayor Tomihisa Taue appeared to implicitly criticize the bills in a speech at the ceremony.

"Worries and anxieties are now spreading among us that this pledge made 70 years ago and the principle for peace in the Japanese Constitution may be now undermined," he said to loud applause.

While Taue refrained from passing judgment on the bills, his statement was more blunt than a similar one issued by Hiroshima Mayor Kazumi Matsui on the anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima three days earlier, in directly referring to the issue.

"For the sake of Nagasaki, and for the sake of all of Japan, we must never change the peaceful principle that we renounce war," the mayor said, referring to Article 9 of the Constitution, which rejects war and the use of force as a means of settling international disputes.

Abe has faced criticism and opposition for his efforts to boost the role of the SDF, changes that open the door to putting troops into combat for the first time since the war.

A Constitution imposed by U.S. Occupation authorities after the war prevented Japan's military from engaging in combat except in self-defense.

In the now bustling port city of Nagasaki, about 74,000 people died in the initial blast near a major arms factory from a plutonium bomb dubbed “Fat Man,” or from after-effects in the months and years following the bombing.

The attack on Nagasaki came three days after American B-29 bomber Enola Gay dropped a bomb, dubbed “Little Boy”, on Hiroshima, the first atomic bombing in history.

Nearly everything around it was incinerated by a wall of heat up to 4,000 degrees Celsius — hot enough to melt steel.

About 140,000 people are estimated to have been killed in the Hiroshima attack, including those who survived the bombing itself but later died from radiation sickness.

Gums bled, teeth fell out, hair came off in clumps; there were cancers, premature births, malformed babies and sudden deaths.

The twin bombings dealt the final blows to Imperial Japan, which surrendered on Aug. 15, 1945, bringing an end to World War II.

While some historians say that they prevented many more casualties in a planned land invasion, critics counter that the attacks were not necessary to end the war, arguing that Japan was already heading for imminent defeat.

At memorial ceremonies in Hiroshima on Thursday, Abe said Japan would submit a fresh resolution to abolish nuclear weapons at the U.N. General Assembly this year.

“We have been tasked with conveying the inhumanity of nuclear weapons, across generations and borders,” he told the crowd.

The number of hibakusha in and outside Japan — those with documents certifying they were atomic bomb survivors — stood at 183,519 in March this year, nearly half of the peak of 372,264 in 1980, according to the Health, Labor and Welfare Ministry. Their average age exceeded 80 this year.

This year’s memorials also come days ahead of the scheduled restart of a nuclear reactor in Japan — the first one to be rebooted after a two-year hiatus following the tsunami-sparked disaster at the Fukushima No. 1 atomic power plant in 2011.

While Abe has pushed to switch reactors back on, public opposition remains high after the worst nuclear accident since Chernobyl in 1986.

Doubts over no-war, no-nuke policy as Nagasaki marks A-bomb anniv.

<http://mainichi.jp/english/english/newsselect/news/20150809p2g00m0dm001000c.html>

NAGASAKI (Kyodo) -- Concerns and doubts over the Japanese government's commitment to the country's postwar pacifism and non-nuclear principles were swirling Sunday as Nagasaki marked the 70th anniversary of the U.S. atomic bombing of the city.

In his Peace Declaration at a remembrance ceremony at the Peace Park in Nagasaki, Mayor Tomihisa Taue called for "careful" deliberations on legislation that would cause a landmark shift in Japan's defense posture, citing "widespread unease" that ideas and beliefs on peace in the war-renouncing Constitution are wavering.

The security bills, proposed by the government of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, are now in the upper chamber of parliament after the ruling parties pushed them through the lower house last month.

The legislation would greatly expand the role of the Self-Defense Forces overseas by loosening the limits imposed on them by the supreme law.

While Taue refrained from passing judgment on the bills, his statement was more blunt than a similar one issued by Hiroshima Mayor Kazumi Matsui on the anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima three days before, in directly referring to the issue.

Highlighting the conviction of atomic bomb survivors that nuclear weapons must not exist and Japan must never go to war, Taue reminded that the Constitution's pacifism was born from the "painful and harsh experiences" of being subjected to atomic bombings at the end of World War II and "from reflection upon the war."

"For the sake of Nagasaki, and for the sake of all of Japan, we must never change the peaceful principle that we renounce war," the mayor said, referring to Article 9 of the Constitution, which rejects war and the use of force as a means of settling international disputes.

Representing Nagasaki atomic bomb survivors, 86-year-old Sumiteru Taniguchi, whose back was severely burned in the atomic blast, delivered a "pledge for peace" at the ceremony in which he criticized the security bills for going against the wishes of the survivors, called "hibakusha."

Taniguchi said: "This security bill the government is pursuing will lead to war. It is an attempt to overturn the nuclear abolition activities and wishes held and carried out by the hibakusha and those multitudes of people who desire peace. We cannot accept this."

Atomic bomb survivors have also been alarmed that the country's three non-nuclear principles -- not producing, possessing or allowing nuclear weapons on Japanese territory -- could be undermined due to the bills.

Their concerns heightened when Defense Minister Gen Nakatani said Wednesday the legislation would theoretically allow Japan to transport nuclear weapons as part of its logistical support for foreign countries.

It did not help that Abe failed to mention the principles in his anniversary speech in Hiroshima, even though he had touched on them in speeches on similar occasions the previous two years.

Facing criticism for the lack of reference to the principles, Abe said in his speech in Nagasaki that the government will uphold them, and he vowed to lead international nuclear disarmament efforts toward a world without nuclear weapons.

In his speech, Taue also called on the importance of passing on memories of the atomic bombings as well as other tragedies in war, including the sufferings Japan inflicted on many people in Asia, while expressing support for the people of Fukushima in their struggle to recover from the 2011 Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant disaster.

The world's first use of nuclear weapons in warfare took place in Hiroshima at 8:15 a.m. Aug. 6, 1945, and killed an estimated 140,000 people by the end of the year. A second atomic bomb was dropped on Nagasaki at 11:02 a.m. on Aug. 9, and Japan surrendered six days later, bringing an end to World War II. In Nagasaki, then a city with a population of about 240,000, an estimated 74,000 people were killed in the blast and in its aftermath by the end of the year.

The number of hibakusha in and outside Japan -- those with documents certifying they were atomic bomb survivors -- stood at 183,519 in March this year, nearly half of the peak of 372,264 in 1980, according to the Health, Labor and Welfare Ministry. Their average age exceeded 80 this year.

Nagasaki 2015 Peace Declaration

Nagasaki peace declaration on 70th anniversary of atomic bombing

<http://mainichi.jp/english/english/newsselect/news/20150809p2a00m0na001000c.html>

Below is the Peace Declaration issued on Aug. 9, 2015, by Nagasaki Mayor Tomihisa Taue on the 70th anniversary of the atomic bombing of the city.

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At 11:02 a.m., on the 9th August 1945, a single atomic bomb instantly reduced Nagasaki to a ruin. A vast amount of radiation passed through people's bodies, and the city was struck by heat rays and a blast that defy imagination. Seventy-four thousand of the city's population of 240,000 people were killed. A further 75,000 individuals sustained injuries. It was said that vegetation would not grow for at least 70 years. However, today, 70 years on, this hill in Urakami, which was once a ruin, is now enveloped in greenery. Nevertheless, those hibakusha, atomic bomb survivors, whose bodies were eaten away by radiation, and who continue to suffer from the aftereffects, can never forget that day.

The atomic bomb was born of war, and was used in war.

The conviction that nuclear weapons must not exist, and that we must never go to war again, was deeply and powerfully engraved upon the hearts of the hibakusha, who know firsthand the fearsome destructive force of atomic bombs. The peaceful ideology of the Constitution of Japan was born from these painful and harsh experiences, and from reflection upon the war. Since the war, our country has walked the path of a peaceful nation. For the sake of Nagasaki, and for the sake of all of Japan, we must never change the peaceful principle that we renounce war.

Most of our population is now made up of the post-war generation. The memories of war are fast fading from our society. We must not forget the atomic bomb experiences of those in Nagasaki and Hiroshima. Neither should we forget the air raids which destroyed Tokyo and many other cities, the Battle of Okinawa, nor the many people of Asia who suffered because of this tragic war. Now, 70 years on, it is vital that we continue to pass on those memories.

I ask that those of you who experienced the atomic bomb and the war in Japan and across the globe speak of your experiences, and not allow those memories to fade.

To the young generation, I ask that you do not push wartime experiences aside saying that they are stories of the past. Understand that the wartime generation tell you their stories because what they speak of could, in the future, happen to you as well. Therefore, please inherit their wish for peace. Please imagine what you would do in such circumstances, and ask yourself "What can I do for the sake of peace?" You, the young generation, have the power to transcend national borders and create new relationships.

The greatest power to realize a world without war and without nuclear weapons lies inside each and every one of us. Listen to stories of the war, sign petitions for nuclear abolition, and visit atomic bomb exhibitions. Together, these individual actions can create a much larger power. In Nagasaki, the younger generation, which includes second and third generation hibakusha, are inheriting the wish for peace and are taking action. Our individual strengths are the greatest power in realizing a world without war and without nuclear weapons. The power of civil society is the power to move governments, and to move the world.

In May of this year, the "Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)" ended without the adoption of a Final Document. However, the efforts of those countries which are attempting to ban nuclear weapons made possible a draft Final Document which incorporated steps towards nuclear disarmament.

I ask the following of the heads of the NPT member states.

Please do not let this Review Conference have been a waste. Please continue your efforts to debate a legal framework, such as a "Nuclear Weapons Convention (NWC)," at every opportunity, including at the General Assembly of the United Nations.

Many countries at the Review Conference were in agreement that it is important to visit the atomic-bombed cities of Nagasaki and Hiroshima.

Once again, I make a call from Nagasaki.

I address President Obama, heads of state, including the heads of the nuclear weapon states, and all the people of the world. Please come to Nagasaki and Hiroshima, and see for yourself exactly what happened under those mushroom clouds 70 years ago. Please understand and accept the message of the hibakusha, who are still doing their best to pass on their experiences, not simply as "victims," but as "members of the human race."

I appeal to the Government of Japan.

Please explore national security measures which do not rely on nuclear deterrence. The establishment of a "Northeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (NEA-NWFZ)," as advocated by researchers in America, Japan, Korea, China, and many other countries, would make this possible. Fix your sights on the future, and please consider a conversion from a "nuclear umbrella" to a "non-nuclear umbrella."

This summer, Nagasaki held the "International Youth Peace Forum," where young people from 128 different countries and regions considered and discussed peace.

In November, Nagasaki will host the "Pugwash International Conference" for the first time. At this Conference, which was inspired by Albert Einstein, who understood the terror of nuclear weapons, scientists from all over the world will gather, discuss the problem of nuclear weapons, and convey a message of peace from Nagasaki to the world.

"Peace from Nagasaki." We shall continue to sow the seeds of peace as we treasure these words.

Furthermore, four years on from the Great East Japan Earthquake, Nagasaki continues to support the people of Fukushima who are suffering due to the accident at the nuclear power plant.

The Diet is currently deliberating a bill which will determine how our country guarantees its security. There is widespread unease and concern that the oath which was engraved onto our hearts 70 years ago and the peaceful ideology of the Constitution of Japan are now wavering. I urge the Government and the Diet to listen to these voices of unease and concern, concentrate their wisdom, and conduct careful and sincere deliberations.

This year, the average age of the hibakusha has now passed 80. I strongly request that the Government of Japan fulfill its responsibility of providing substantial care that conforms to the actual needs of the hibakusha, and increase the extent of the area acknowledged as being exposed to the atomic bomb while those who were there are still alive.

We, the people of Nagasaki, offer our most heartfelt condolences to those who lost their lives to the atomic bomb. We hereby declare that together with the citizens of Hiroshima, we shall continue to use all our strength to achieve a world without nuclear weapons, and the realization of peace.

Tomihisa Taue, Mayor of Nagasaki

August 9, 2015

PM Abe's Nagasaki speech

August 9, 2015

Full text of PM Abe's speech at Nagasaki A-bomb ceremony

<http://mainichi.jp/english/english/newsselect/news/20150809p2a00m0na004000c.html>

Below is a provisional translation of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's speech at the Nagasaki Peace Memorial Ceremony on Aug. 9, 2015, as released by the prime minister's office.

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Here today, at the opening of the Nagasaki Peace Memorial Ceremony on the 70th anniversary of the atomic bombing, I reverently express my sincere condolences to the souls of the great number of atomic bomb victims.

I also extend my deepest sympathy to those still suffering from the aftereffects of the atomic bomb even now.

Seventy years have passed since the atomic bomb dropped that day reduced Nagasaki to ashes, devoid even of any vegetation. At that time some 70,000 people lost their precious lives. In this catastrophe, even those who survived were forced to live lives of hardships beyond description.

Yet despite this, the citizens of Nagasaki rose powerfully from amidst this misery to admirably build up an International Culture City blessed with World Cultural Heritage and a beautiful natural environment.

As we look around the city of Nagasaki that has achieved its present-day restoration, we appreciate once more how precious peace is. I have also renewed my determination for Japan, as the only country to have ever experienced the horror of nuclear devastation in war, to take the lead in the international community's nuclear disarmament efforts, firmly upholding the "Three Non-Nuclear Principles" as we work towards the realization of a world free of nuclear weapons.

Especially, this year is the 70th anniversary of the atomic bombings. Regrettably, a draft final document could not be adopted at the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), but Japan is determined to make even greater efforts towards realizing a world free of nuclear weapons as we continue to call for the cooperation of both nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear weapon States. As an expression of that determination, the Government of Japan will submit a new draft resolution on the total elimination of nuclear weapons to the United Nations General Assembly this autumn.

At the end of August, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) Group of Eminent Persons meeting and the United Nations Conference on Disarmament Issues will convene in Hiroshima. Not long after, the Pugwash Conference will be held here in Nagasaki in November. Then in 2016, the G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting will be convened in Hiroshima. Through these international meetings, we will send out our thoughts powerfully from atomic bombing sites as a message to the international community.

Moreover, through world leaders and youth from around the globe becoming directly acquainted with the tragic reality of the atomic bombings, we will advance our efforts to realize a world free of nuclear weapons still further.

This year the average age of atomic bomb survivors is for the first time over 80 years old. It has also been 20 years since the Atomic Bomb Survivors Relief Law, enacted to provide support for aging atomic bomb survivors, came into effect. We will continue to develop thoroughly our comprehensive relief measures covering health and medical services and welfare.

In particular, giving consideration to the feelings of those who have applied for recognition as having an atomic bomb disease, we will expedite screenings of the applications so that recognition is granted at the earliest possible time.

I express my heartfelt prayers for the repose of the souls of the victims and my best wishes to the bereaved families and to the atomic bomb survivors, along with my sincere prayers for the inner peace of all the participants today and the people of Nagasaki City.

Shinzo Abe

Prime Minister of Japan

August 9, 2015

Nagasaki ceremony

August 9, 2015

Peace memorial ceremony marks 70th anniversary of atomic bombing of Nagasaki

http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/social_affairs/AJ201508090015

THE ASAHI SHIMBUN

NAGASAKI--A peace memorial ceremony was held here to mourn for atomic bomb victims and seek abolition of nuclear weapons on Aug. 9, which marked the 70th anniversary of the atomic bombing of the city in 1945.

Ambassadors and other officials from a record 75 countries participated, according to the Nagasaki city government.

In the city's Peace Declaration, Nagasaki Mayor Tomihisa Taue emphasized the necessity of passing on the memories of the atomic bombing and the war to the next generation.

As for security legislation now before the Upper House, which would greatly expand the role of the Self-Defense Forces overseas, Taue called on the government and the Diet to conduct careful deliberations, saying, "Anxiety and concern are spreading."

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe also made a speech, in which he said the government will make efforts for nuclear disarmament toward the realization of a nuclear-free world while firmly maintaining the three non-nuclear principles.

In a similar ceremony held in Hiroshima on Aug. 6, Abe did not make reference to the non-nuclear principles, which had been mentioned by prime ministers, including himself, in recent years. Abe has faced sharp criticism from atomic bomb survivors and opposition lawmakers for the omission.

The principles are pledges that Japan will not possess or produce nuclear weapons and will not allow them to be brought into the country.

Pledge by A-bomb survivor

August 9, 2015

Nagasaki A-bomb survivor's pledge on 70th anniversary of bombing

<http://mainichi.jp/english/english/newsselect/news/20150809p2a00m0na002000c.html>

The following is a pledge for peace by Sumiteru Taniguchi, a survivor of the Aug. 9, 1945, atomic bombing of Nagasaki, on the 70th anniversary of the bombing.

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On this day 70 years ago, over 70,000 people were instantly killed by the American atomic bomb which was dropped over these skies. Corpses charred black. Voices begging for help from beneath toppled buildings. People whose flesh had been torn and was hanging loose, with their intestines exposed. Faces swollen like pumpkins. People whose eyes had fallen out of their sockets. Large groups of people who had died in the Urakami River as they sought water. That night, this land in Urakami was a sea of fire. It was hell.

That hell did not end. The uninjured, those who wandered the hypocenter searching for their families, and those who rushed to provide relief and aid suddenly developed reddish-purple spots all over their bodies, and died vomiting blood.

On this day 70 years ago, I was 16 years old. I was a postman. At the moment the bomb exploded I was riding my bicycle through Sumiyoshi-machi, 1.8 km from the hypocenter. Suddenly, from behind me there came a rainbow of light, and I was blown over and crushed into the road by the ferocious force of the blast. When at length I attempted to stand, I discovered that the skin on my left arm was hanging loose like a dirty rag from my shoulder right down to my fingers. I touched my back and found that my clothes were no longer there, and my skin came away slimy on my hands. Strangely, I did not bleed a single drop of blood, and neither did I feel any pain.

I spent two nights in the mountains, until I was finally rescued on the morning of the third day. I was hospitalized for 3 years and 7 months. I spent 1 year and 9 months of that time wandering the edges of death, lying on my stomach because of the enormous burns which covered my back. This gave me bedsores which rotted the flesh on my chest to the bone. Even today, you can still see my heart beating between my ribs, because it is as though my chest has been scooped out. I have been told that my lung capacity is almost half that of a healthy person.

The lives and health of those who had barely survived was in ruins. We spent 12 years in abandonment, fighting illness without receiving any aid from the state. In 1956, encouraged by the anti-atomic and hydrogen bomb movements that had grown in opposition of the damage caused by American hydrogen bomb tests at Bikini Atoll, we, the hibakusha (atomic bomb survivors), established an organization for hibakusha. That I did not join the mountain of corpses that day has enabled me to dedicate my life to the hibakusha cause.

After the war, the "Constitution" was established, which pledged to the world that Japan would never fight in a war again, and would not possess weapons. However, now there is an attempt to return to the wartime era by forcing through approval of the right to collective self-defense and an amendment to the Constitution. This security bill the government is pursuing will lead to war. It is an attempt to overturn the nuclear abolition activities and wishes held and carried out by the hibakusha and those multitudes of people who desire peace. We cannot accept this.

Nuclear weapons are cruel and inhumane. There is overwhelming international support for their abolition.

I pledge before all those who desire peace to inherit the wishes of all my companions who have passed away over the past 70 years, and that as a living witness of war and the atomic bomb that I will continue to convey the truth of the atomic bombing throughout the world for as long as I live, so that we may realize a peaceful world without war or nuclear weapons.

Sumiteru Taniguchi

August 9, 2015

Japan should lead the way toward nuclear disarmament

August 10, 2015

U.N. official says Japan can take global lead in eradication of nuclear arms

http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/politics/AJ201508100085

By RYUTA SOMETAYA/ Staff Writer

NAGASAKI--A United Nations official said Japan, the only nation to have suffered nuclear attacks, should lead the way toward global nuclear disarmament, during an interview with The Asahi Shimbun.

Lassina Zerbo, executive secretary of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) Organization, was in Nagasaki to participate in a ceremony to memorialize the atomic bombing of the city 70 years ago.

"It's an important milestone," the U.N. official from Burkina Faso said on Aug. 8. "Japan can lead the way to realizing a ban on nuclear weapons."

Zerbo said Japan, a nation that knows firsthand the horrors of nuclear weapons, can lead the debate on the effectiveness of nuclear deterrence.

"Japan shouldn't shy away from being emotional about it," he said. "Japan can become the leader in pushing international nuclear disarmament, peace and a better future for the world."

The CTBT was adopted by the U.N. General Assembly in 1996 as part of the U.N.'s plan to halt nuclear proliferation, but has not entered force as some nations have not yet ratified the pact.

As of June, 164 nations had ratified the treaty. Although the United States and China have signed the treaty, they have not officially ratified it. India and Pakistan are among the nations that have not signed the treaty.

Zerbo, who also participated in the peace ceremony in Hiroshima on Aug. 6 and held a meeting with Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida the following day, told The Asahi Shimbun that now is the perfect opportunity for Japan to take the initiative, as many of the hibakusha (atomic bomb survivors) are elderly. The health ministry announced in July that the average age of hibakusha in 2015 was over 80.

Zerbo also said the agreement reached between the United States and Iran in their nuclear deal was a significant step in global nuclear disarmament. He said if Iran ratifies the CTBT, other Middle Eastern nations that have not yet ratified the pact could follow suit.

"Hopefully, that will help build some confidence in the Middle East and create a condition for ratification," Zerbo said. "I think that will make room for Israel and Egypt to come together and reach a consensus on this treaty."

Zerbo also said that North Korea should not be excluded from the nuclear disarmament community.

Volunteer transmitters to preserve stories of survivors

August 16, 2015

Oral tradition and the bomb

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2015/08/15/editorials/oral-tradition-bomb/#.VdCSkPnwmot>

One of the most intriguing and important stories surrounding the 70th anniversaries of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki atomic bombings connects to oral history. **Japanese culture has long been divided between its oral culture and its written culture, though both have remained vibrant.** Not only are different language forms used in both, but also different ways of feeling and thinking are encoded differently into spoken or written language.

That might seem like a small nuance, but oral tradition is the crucial element of an important project to preserve the memories of atomic bomb survivors. Those survivors have long recounted their stories of the bombings directly to schoolchildren, local groups and overseas audiences. However, as those survivors reach old age, the problem has cropped up — who is to carry on their direct, personal storytelling for the next generation?

Fortunately, a new program pairing volunteers with survivors has been working to keep their memories, their stories and their words alive. The volunteers, called *denshoshu*, or transmitters, have been shadowing the survivors, sometimes for years, as they tell their stories at schools and community centers, soaking up the details of their experiences in order to preserve and transmit them for the next generation. The transmitters will be able to pass on their experiences in the same way.

Of course, historical archives, library records, films, books and websites have also recorded the experiences of survivors in written form. However, Japan has a long history of deeply respecting the tradition of passing on culture, skills and knowledge by oral means.

The directly spoken words of witnesses have power and authority, and just as importantly, immediacy and humanity. The transmitters and survivors are working hard to be sure those spoken words and the stories of those survivors will not disappear.

The number of transmitters, though, is just not enough. Many more are needed. It can take years to hear all the details of one survivor's story. The number of officially recognized survivors of the atomic bombings stands now at 200,000, down by 6,000 from last year. Their average age is 80.

The program of connecting volunteer transmitters with survivors needs to be encouraged and expanded. Local governments should find funds to develop the project further. Expanding the project requires time, effort and financial support. Translation might be important, too. Japan has many things to offer to the increasing number of tourists, but the terrible experience of the atomic bombings, told firsthand by survivors, might be one of the most moving. Preserving their stories in spoken form is vital and urgent.

The A-bomb: Double standard and distortion of history

August 17, 2015

One of history's worst war crimes

<http://socialistworker.org/2015/08/17/one-of-historys-worst-war-crimes>

Khury Petersen-Smith punctures the mythology about the U.S. decision to use the atomic bomb at the end of the Second World War--and why the myths still endure.

IN THE spring of 2009, activists in Hiroshima, Japan, launched a project to persuade President Barack Obama to visit their city. Hiroshima and Nagasaki became known to the world in 1945 as history's first victims of nuclear attack when the U.S. dropped atomic bombs on those cities. The effort to bring Obama involved hundreds of middle- and high-school students, as well as hibakusha--survivors of the atomic bombings.

A visit by the president could have sent a message: A recognition of the horror of nuclear weapons and solidarity with the efforts of Japanese activists seeking to abolish them. Buoyed by Obama's winning of the Nobel Peace Prize, the "President Obama Invitation Project" approached former U.S. Rep. Dennis Kucinich, also a former candidate for the presidency, to extend a formal invitation to Obama to visit Hiroshima.

Kucinich vowed to deliver the message.

You could be forgiven for missing this event. The story died when the White House ignored the invite. As with so many who expected a departure from policies and politics associated with the Bush administration, Obama betrayed the hopes of activists in Hiroshima.

EARLY AUGUST marked 70 years since the U.S. atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

While people in those cities and elsewhere in Japan marked the occasion by remembering the catastrophic bombings and their aftermath, there was silence from the U.S. government. For its part, the *New York Times* posed the following question on its website: "Did the U.S. have to drop atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki?" The *Times* invited readers "submit their arguments" and promised to select some for publication.

The fact that the *Times* considers the U.S. decision to use nuclear weapons against cities of people an open question--70 years after the fact--speaks to the shocking extent to which the U.S. government and mainstream media apologize for one of history's greatest war crimes.

The nuclear attacks are treated very differently, especially in the U.S., than other atrocities committed by the warring powers of the Second World War. Writing in an opinion piece for the New York Times last year, Norihiro Kato pointed out the **double standard in the way that history remembers the crimes committed by the United States, compared with those of Japan in China and Germany throughout Europe. The difference lies not in the atrocities themselves, but in the attitude the world has taken toward them.**

The international community has reached a consensus regarding all those other horrors: They violated international law; they never should have occurred in the first place; they must never be permitted to happen again...

The situation is completely different with respect to the atomic bombings. Even if most people around the world privately believe the indiscriminate killing of civilians with nuclear weapons is wrong, there is no shared public consensus to this effect...**The permanent members of the United Nations Security Council oppose the notion of an unconditional ban; they themselves possess nuclear weapons and want to reserve their "right" to use them.**

BECAUSE TODAY'S dominant world powers have a vested interest in whitewashing America's history of atomic warfare--combined with the fact that, as a victor of the Second World War, the U.S. government

exercises tremendous power over how that war is remembered--the relative silence about Hiroshima and Nagasaki is rendered explicable.

It is not mere coincidence that the country with the most power on the world stage today is also the one that committed unforgivable crimes. Indeed, the U.S. *established* its superpower status at the end of the Second World War by demonstrating both its capacity to produce as well as its willingness to use the most destructive weapons ever invented.

It is ironic, to say the least, that the U.S. has used the mantle of "superpower" to regulate the war-making of other countries--in particular, the production and use of nuclear weapons. **The inconvenient truth is that the very country that has appointed itself as the guardian of the world from nuclear proliferation is also the only one in history to use atomic bombs in war.**

The most unmistakable reminder of this strange reality arrived in the form of an agreement--negotiated by the U.S.--to curtail Iran's development of nuclear weapons. The deal was controversial, but not for what should be the most obvious reason: The state that brokered it produced the most extensive system in history for the production and deployment of nuclear weapons--and is still the only state to have used them in war.

The ability of the U.S. to play the role of global policeman regarding nuclear proliferation--and all other geopolitical matters--rests on **a distortion of history**, in addition to its actual military might.

According to the mythology of the nuclear attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the U.S. actually saved lives by using the weapons--because the bombings avoided a costlier ground invasion.

This story begins with President Truman's claim during his August 9, 1945, radio address informing the American public of the decision to use the weapons. He justified the bombing of Hiroshima both as an act of revenge for the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and brutal treatment of American prisoners of war, as well as a means to "shorten the agony of war" and "save the lives of thousands and thousands of young Americans."

President Truman said that the U.S. took on an "awful responsibility" by becoming the world's first nuclear power. He framed his decision to use the bomb, despite its destructive power, as a calculated one. The contrast between Truman's rational, American mind against the racist caricature of the fanatical, belligerent Japanese was obvious in 1945, after years of anti-Japanese propaganda and the detention of 100,000 Japanese-Americans in concentration camps, which was explained as a way to prevent them from becoming a fifth column bent on undermining the U.S. war effort.

Truman argued in that speech that the U.S. had selected Hiroshima, which it had designated as a "military target," in order to save civilian lives.

All of these rationales were, of course, lies.

IN AN article for TomDispatch, historian Christian Appy recounts an episode whose outcome could have been a new conversation about the American decision to use the atomic bomb. In 1995, the Smithsonian Institute prepared an exhibit on the 50th anniversary of the bombings.

Originally, it planned to present the differing opinions among U.S. generals at the end of the war about the military necessity of dropping the bombs. As part of the exhibit, charred artifacts from Hiroshima and photos of dead and injured bomb victims would have been displayed.

But right-wing organizations and the U.S. Senate itself intervened to prevent this well-rounded exhibit from happening. The Senate passed a resolution affirming the use of nuclear weapons as "momentous in helping to bring World War II to a merciful end." Appy writes:

Merciful? Consider just this: the number of civilians killed at Hiroshima and Nagasaki alone was more than twice the number of American troops killed during the entire Pacific war. In the end, the Smithsonian displayed little but the Enola Gay itself, a gleaming relic of American victory in the "Good War."

The U.S. government buried the truth, and it continues to do so seven decades after the war--with the complicity of the mainstream media and museums like the Smithsonian. The act of obscuring the real reasoning and devastation of the bombings **began a history of hiding more nuclear crimes on the part of the United States, including its extensive and devastating nuclear weapons testing program in the Marshall Islands and elsewhere in the Pacific.**

The U.S. Atomic Energy Commission treated Pacific Islander victims of radiation not as medical patients, but as human subjects in its experiments. Whereas there is some recognition among progressives and the left in the U.S. that the government's crimes in Hiroshima and Nagasaki were unforgivable, there is virtually no conversation about the testing program in the Pacific islands--or its victims--due to the government's efforts to marginalize them.

The fact that the U.S. government--under both Republicans or Democrats (and remember, it was a Democratic president who ordered the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki)--has not reckoned with its actions 70 years later shows that it simply will not, unless it is forced to. A new movement against U.S. imperialism, one that exposes its crimes of the past and resists those of the present, is sorely needed.

This summer, a new antiwar movement is shaking Japan. Tens of thousands of people, including a younger generation of activists, have mobilized against Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's efforts to rewrite the Japanese constitution in order to allow the country to have an offensive military--which was outlawed at the conclusion of the Second World War.

With the nightmares of that war in mind, protesters have set out to oppose Japanese militarism. The challenge remains in this country to revive a struggle against U.S. empire--in solidarity with its victims around the world.

Is Kazakhtan's new fuel bank good news?

August 25, 2015

New nuclear fuel bank a welcome development

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2015/08/25/commentary/world-commentary/new-nuclear-fuel-bank-a-welcome-development/#.VdyWHJfwlLM>

by Gareth Evans

CANBERRA – **One of the many things the world has learned from the Iran nuclear saga is that its leaders made a mistake, when negotiating the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in the 1960s, in not doing anything to constrain uranium enrichment and plutonium reprocessing.** This failure apparently stemmed from the belief — long since proven wrong, certainly in the case of uranium — that the only states ever likely to possess that technical capability already possessed nuclear weapons, or (like Germany) were totally committed never to acquire them.

As a result, any member state can argue for its “inalienable right” under the NPT to pursue any stage of the nuclear fuel cycle. Although any such right extends only to activities for “peaceful purposes,” the loophole

is gaping. Any technically capable state — and there are now dozens of them — can build uranium enrichment facilities with the official purpose of producing fuel for nuclear power or research reactors, but which are nonetheless inherently capable of producing the much higher-grade fuel needed for nuclear weapons.

It is not for nothing that such facilities have been described as “**bomb starter kits**,” and that Iran’s progress down that path — whether deliberately designed to give it a latent weapons breakout capability or not — has spooked so many others in the international community. That is why there was so much pressure to produce the deal now on the table, which dramatically limits Iran’s enrichment capability.

While renegotiating the NPT itself to close the enrichment loophole seems for now a lost cause, there are other ways to address this proliferation risk. One of the most important, and long-advocated, strategies is to demonstrate to countries that rely on nuclear power, or are planning to develop it, that they do not need their own uranium-enrichment program to ensure their fuel supply’s security.

Concern about fuel-supply security has always been Iran’s main publicly stated justification for acquiring its enrichment capability — a justification that its critics assert was manufactured simply to conceal a covert weapons agenda. Whether or not that is the case, all current and would-be nuclear power producers are entitled to be anxious about having an absolutely assured fuel supply, given the major economic and social consequences they would face in the event of a disruption.

Yes, until now, the commercial nuclear-fuel market has worked well: no power reactor has had to shut down because of fuel-supply disruptions. But the cut-off of the supply of other energy resources (notably Russia’s disruption of natural-gas supplies to Ukraine and, by extension, to Western Europe) has raised legitimate concerns about whether this could happen with nuclear fuel.

Although the issue has been much debated, until now there has been only modest progress in developing fuel-supply assurance arrangements that would meet this concern. Russia, with the support of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), maintains a sizable reserve of low-enriched uranium (LEU) at its international center in Angarsk; but, in the current security environment, there has been understandable international reluctance to rely on it. The United Kingdom has proposed a supply guarantee of its own, though it has so far attracted little attention.

Now, in an important new development, to be officially launched this month (on Aug. 27), **Kazakhstan is establishing a major new international fuel bank, which it will operate on behalf of the IAEA**. The new facility should once and for all remove the main excuse that has been advanced, sincerely or not, for building and maintaining homegrown enrichment capability.

Scheduled to commence operations in 2017, the Kazakh fuel bank will store up to 90 tons of LEU, sufficient to refuel three typical power-producing light water reactors. While Kazakhstan will physically operate the bank, the uranium will be owned and controlled by the IAEA, and made available to non-nuclear-weapon states if, for any reason, they cannot secure the LEU they need from the commercial market.

Provided the state in question is in compliance with its comprehensive non-proliferation safeguards agreement with the IAEA, it can draw the required fuel from the bank and transfer it to a fuel fabricator to make fuel assemblies for the reactors involved.

The Kazakh fuel bank has **very wide and high-level international backing**, helped by the country’s credentials. A former nuclear test-site state, Kazakhstan willingly gave up the nuclear weapons on its territory when the opportunity arose with the dissolution of the Soviet Union, and it has been a strong and consistent advocate of nuclear arms control and disarmament ever since.

The bank has been funded by voluntary contributions, including \$50 million from the Nuclear Threat Initiative, a U.S.-based NGO, \$49 million from the U.S. government, up to \$25 million from the European Union, \$10 million each from Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates, and \$5 million from Norway. Aside from the Iran deal, good news on nuclear weapons has been sparse in recent years. The new Kazakh fuel bank is a significant step toward achieving a world free of nuclear weapons. Those who have worked to establish it deserve the world's gratitude.

Gareth Evans was Australia's foreign minister 1988-1996, co-chaired the International Commission on Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament 2009, co-authored "Nuclear Weapons: The State of Play 2015," and convenes the Asia Pacific Leadership Network on Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament. © Project Syndicate, 2015

Wanted: Early ratification of test ban treaty

August 25, 2015

Declaration calls for early ratification of treaty banning nuclear weapons testing

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2015/08/25/national/declaration-calls-early-ratification-treaty-banning-nuclear-weapons-testing/#.VdyVApfwLLM>

Kyodo

HIROSHIMA – A group of internationally recognized experts and eminent personalities promoting a global ban on nuclear weapons testing stressed the need to achieve the early ratification of a related treaty as it wrapped up its two-day meeting in Hiroshima on Tuesday.

In the Hiroshima Declaration, named after the city, which suffered the U.S. atomic bombing at the end of World War II, the Group of Eminent Persons for the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty called the treaty “one of the most essential practical measures for nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation.”

Among the 10 attendees of the group's meeting, which is the fourth of its kind and held for the first time in Japan, were former U.S. Defense Secretary William Perry and former British Secretary of State for Defense Des Browne.

The declaration also touched on the request of atomic bomb survivors who have asked world leaders to visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki, which was also devastated by the U.S. atomic bombing in 1945, to deepen their understanding of the catastrophic consequences of nuclear weapons.

Turning to North Korea, which has conducted nuclear tests three times in the past, the group called on Pyongyang to “join international community's efforts toward nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation by refraining from conducting any further nuclear tests.”

The CTBT, which aims to establish a verifiable global ban on all types of nuclear explosive tests, has been signed by 183 countries and ratified by 164.

However to enter into force, it must be signed and ratified by the 44 countries with nuclear capabilities. Eight of those states — the United States, China, Egypt, Iran, Israel, North Korea, India and Pakistan — have yet to ratify the CTBT.

In the declaration, the Group of Eminent Persons, established in 2013, urged the eight states “to urgently sign and ratify the treaty, without waiting for other states to do so.”

It also said that members agreed that “there is an urgency to unite the international community in support of preventing the proliferation and further development of nuclear weapons with the aim of their total elimination.”

On the sidelines of the gathering, Perry, Browne and other group members visited the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum showcasing the devastation in the city after an atomic bomb was dropped for the first time in human history 70 years ago.

A 78-year-old survivor, Keiko Ogura, told the members she believes they have the power to change the world with the abolition of nuclear weapons. She was 8 years old at the time of the bombing and was about 2.4 kilometers away from the epicenter.

Hiroshima and Nagasaki were devastated by the atomic bombings of Aug. 6 and Aug. 9, 1945, respectively, with around 210,000 people estimated to have died by the end of that year.

Nothing can justify nuclear war

August 26, 2015

Former U.S. Defense Secretary William Perry calls for abolition of nuclear weapons

<http://mainichi.jp/english/english/newsselect/news/20150826p2a00m0na003000c.html>

HIROSHIMA -- Former U.S. Secretary of Defense William Perry called for the abolition of nuclear weapons in an interview with the Mainichi Shimbun on Aug. 25 during a visit to Hiroshima, where the atomic bomb was dropped 70 years ago.

"The bombing of Hiroshima probably saved millions of lives, both Americans and Japanese, because the alternative that we had planned was the invasion of mainland Japan," Perry said, but added, "There's no discounting the fact that a bomb this destructive is an affront to humanity, and we should find a way of eliminating it."

Perry, 87, characterized the use of nuclear weapons as "inhumane," and argued, "There's no circumstance, I think, which would justify a nuclear war."

"Hiroshima is a symbol of that," he said.

In 2007, Perry, along with former U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and two others, published an article calling for "a world free of nuclear weapons," which is said to have influenced President Barack Obama's policy toward nuclear weapons.

Asked about the state of international society today, Perry said progress was made for several years after the article was released in 2007, but then things took a negative turn. "We are in danger of more (nuclear) proliferation ... I think the situation today is more dangerous now than it was then."

Perry said that many steps need to be taken toward reducing the nuclear threat, but that bringing the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) into force as soon as possible is the most important. Neither the U.S. nor China has ratified the CTBT.

As for a possible visit to Hiroshima by President Obama during his stay in Japan for the Ise-Shima Summit next May, Perry was hopeful. "I think it's an opportunity for him to make a very powerful message."

As a panelist at the opening session of the 25th annual United Nations Conference on Disarmament Issues in Hiroshima on Aug. 26, Perry pointed out that nuclear weapons went unused during the Cold War due to a combination of management and luck. The reason nuclear disarmament has failed to gain momentum, he explained, is because many people did not know the horrors of nuclear weapons. More people should visit Hiroshima, he said.

Stories resurface

August 26, 2015

U.S. refused to treat former POW atomic bomb survivor

<http://mainichi.jp/english/english/newsselect/news/20150826p2a00m0na018000c.html>

VICTORIA, British Columbia -- A former Dutch soldier held by Japan as a prisoner of war in Nagasaki during World War II had appealed to U.S. authorities to treat him for what he believed were the residual effects of exposure to the atomic bomb dropped on the city by the U.S. on Aug. 9, 1945, the Mainichi Shimbun has learned.

Rudi Hoenson, 92, was being held at the Fukuoka No. 14 POW Camp when the atomic bomb was dropped some 1.7 kilometers away. Dutch researchers located his name on a roster of POWs who had been held at the encampment, and in a follow-up investigation, the Mainichi discovered that Hoenson had immigrated to Victoria, B.C., Canada, and was still living there.

Exchanges between scientists regarding Hoenson's case were found in the archives of the National Academy of Sciences-National Research Council, the founding organization of the Atomic Bomb Casualty Commission (ABCC), which researched the effects of radiation from atomic bombs on humans.

In a letter he sent to a doctor in New York in July 1950, Hoenson wrote that he suffered weight loss, fatigue, eye pain, and bleeding from the gums, which were symptoms found in atomic bomb survivors. Suspecting that he, too, had been exposed to radiation from the bomb, Hoenson sought to be treated as a member of a military that fought alongside the U.S.

Consulted by the doctor who received the note, senior officials at the National Academy of Sciences-National Research Council did not respond favorably. Records indicated one as saying, "Mr. Hoenson's symptomatology, as outlined by himself, does not suggest residual radiation disease." Others, meanwhile, doubted Hoenson's claim of illness itself, writing, "the POWs at Nagasaki were at such distance from the hypocenter that residual radiation effects seemed unlikely," and "We believed that he might be using this as an excuse to get into the U.S.A."

Along with his fellow POWs, Hoenson, who was at the camp when the bomb was dropped, subsequently went through the city center to evacuate, and was also put to work clearing away dead bodies, he told the Mainichi. He also said that his urine was "the color of black coffee with a reddish tint" on the morning after the bombing, and that he lost hair. In 1950, there was little information available about the residual effects of atomic bomb exposure, and although Hoenson consulted doctors in the Netherlands, he was unable to receive effective treatment. The fatigue and lethargy experienced by atomic bomb survivors was reported

early on in Japan, and was later named "genbaku burabura byo," or "atomic bomb lethargy sickness;" its symptoms almost completely match those Hoenson experienced. However, whether such symptoms were caused by radiation has not been verified.

The Japanese government's relief measures for atomic bomb survivors in Japan were introduced in 1957. Today, atomic bomb survivors who live abroad are also eligible for Japanese government certification of their exposure to the bomb, for which Hoenson has not applied. While he says he has no intention of seeking compensation from the U.S., he maintains that he stayed near the hypocenter for days after the bombing, and cannot think of any other reason for his poor health. "We did not know about radiation then," he says, but "now I know (my health issues) were due to radiation."

Experts say that while prisoners of war from the Allied Powers are known to have been killed or injured in the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, this is the first time that documents confirming that a former prisoner had sought treatment for aftereffects from the U.S. have been found.

Former Dutch soldier and POW opens up about atomic bomb experience

<http://mainichi.jp/english/english/newsselect/news/20150826p2a00m0na019000c.html>

VICTORIA, British Columbia -- Surprised by the discovery that letters he wrote decades ago about his poor health had been kept in U.S. archives, and confronted with the reality of his advanced age, local philanthropist Rudi Hoenson has opened up about his long-kept secret: that he survived the atomic bombing of Nagasaki.

A former Dutch soldier who immigrated to Canada in 1951 and eventually became a successful entrepreneur, Hoenson, now 92, had been forthcoming about his experience as a prisoner of war in World War II. But he had avoided speaking about surviving the atomic bombing of Nagasaki for fear people would think he was "showing off." After suffering a minor stroke a few months ago, however, he decided it was time to tell younger generations about his experience, albeit 70 years after it took place, he told the Mainichi Shimbun in Victoria.

Hoenson was taken captive by the Imperial Japanese Army on the Indonesian island of Java in March 1942, and was transported to the Fukuoka No. 14 POW Camp in the city of Nagasaki in April 1943. There, he was forced to work as a welder at a Mitsubishi Heavy Industries shipyard. He was heavily monitored and brutally beaten by military police. Over 70 prisoners died of pneumonia the first winter at the shipyard since they were hardly allowed any breaks, and were only given low-quality rain gear despite it being windy and wet, Hoenson said.

On Aug. 9, 1945, at 11:02 a.m., Hoenson, who was standing near the camp, collapsed from the blast of the atomic bomb. Because he'd been in the shadow of a smoke stack, however, he sustained no major injuries. Three prisoners who'd been right in front of him, meanwhile, were not so lucky -- their clothes went up in flames, and they suffered burns all over their bodies.

As he tried to escape the blazing fire all around him, Hoenson saw Japanese women and children with their clothes charred and their faces and bodies torn apart. That night, he slept with a gravely injured friend in his arms. Later, he and his fellow prisoners were ordered to clear away the dead bodies. "We pulled some (bodies) out (from the debris) but had to be very careful not to pull too hard or we would end up with an arm or a leg," Hoenson explained.

According to the Nagasaki Municipal Government and other authorities, eight prisoners from the Fukuoka No. 14 POW Camp died from the atomic bomb blast. Hoenson recalled, however, that by the time the U.S. military liberated the prisoners in mid-September, some 20 had died of their wounds.

The health symptoms Hoenson developed after returning home closely resembled those of people who had radiation sickness from the atomic bomb. Doctors in the Netherlands were never able to pinpoint the cause of his health issues, however, and Hoenson's hope of receiving cutting-edge treatment in the U.S. never came true. Eventually, he recovered.

Still, he and his wife, whom he met in Canada, decided not to have children. "At the time, there was much talk about babies being born deformed with no arms or legs," he said.

The atomic bomb dropped on Nagasaki by the U.S. military indiscriminately killed many civilians, as well as prisoners of war from the Allied Powers. Hoenson believes, however, that if the atomic bombs had not been dropped on Japan and its cities had been subjected to more conventional bombings, the likes of which were seen in Tokyo, there would have been even more casualties. "I agree with the decision to drop the A-bomb ... even if it had killed me," Hoenson said. Still, as someone with first-hand experience of what happened on Aug. 9, 1945, he added, "I hope nobody ever uses it again."

Conference on nuclear disarmament in Hiroshima

U.N. confab on nuclear disarmament held in Hiroshima

August 26, 2015

<http://mainichi.jp/english/english/newsselect/news/20150826p2g00m0dm072000c.html>

HIROSHIMA (Kyodo) -- Some 80 government officials and experts from around the world gathered in Hiroshima on Wednesday to discuss nuclear disarmament, following up on discussions at the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty review conference earlier in the year.

Hiroshima, which this year marked the 70th anniversary of the U.S. atomic bombing, is hosting the 25th United Nations Conference on Disarmament Issues. The meeting has been held annually in Japan since 1989.

Hiroshima Mayor Kazumi Matsui said in his opening remark, "I would like people to give thought to the horror of nuclear weapons as an absolute evil and to the preciousness of maintaining peace."

In a statement read at the conference, Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida said discussions at the Hiroshima meeting will be important for efforts toward the 2015-2020 NPT review cycle.

"I look forward to the active exchange of views from a wide range of perspectives from countries around the world," Kishida said in the statement.

The conference provides "an informal setting for frank and open discussion on critical issues of disarmament and security," according to the United Nations.

The conference continues through Friday.

A-bomb survivors invited to Nobel Peace prize ceremony

August 31, 2015

Atomic bomb survivors to attend Nobel Peace Prize award ceremony

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2015/08/31/national/atomic-bomb-survivors-attend-nobel-peace-prize-award-ceremony/#.VeRnQ5fwmie>

Kyodo

NAGASAKI – Survivors of the 1945 U.S. atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki have been invited to attend the Noble Peace Prize award ceremony scheduled for December in Oslo, according to the leader of a group that worked with the Norwegian Nobel Committee to arrange the visit.

“Hibakusha are the best contributors to the campaign to eliminate nuclear weapons. (The invitation) will provide an opportunity to enhance global momentum to prevent the repeat of such calamities,” said Kenjin Abe, chairman of the Hiroshima/Nagasaki Survivors Project of Japan.

Such an invitation is rare because people usually invited to the award ceremony are family members or others somehow connected with the winners, according to Abe, an associate professor of social pathology at Toin University of Yokohama.

The invitation is not directly linked to the ongoing process to select Nobel Peace Prize laureates this year, he said. Some atomic bomb victims have been nominated for the award in the past.

The letter of invitation dated Aug. 2 says two representatives, one each from Hiroshima and Nagasaki, are expected to attend the ceremony in Oslo City Hall on Dec. 10, Abe said.

From Hiroshima, Emiko Okada, 78, is likely to attend the ceremony. She was 8 years old when the bomb was dropped on her city and spoke about her experience at the U.N. headquarters in 2009.

“I am very pleased to attend (the ceremony) on the 70th anniversary of the atomic bombing, a milestone year. I would like to tell participants from various countries what happened under the mushroom cloud,” she said.

A selection process is underway in Nagasaki to select the representative of that city.

“We are carefully considering the participation in the ceremony as our members are old, but (the invitation) is wonderful,” said Hirotami Yamada, 84, a member of a group engaged in activities to share the experiences of hibakusha.”

Will have to try harder

September 3, 2015

Nuclear disarmament needs a push

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2015/09/03/editorials/nuclear-disarmament-needs-push/#.VelfUJfwmic>

The city of Hiroshima hosted two international conferences in a row last week to discuss efforts to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons — the fourth conference of the Group of Eminent Persons for the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) and the 25th United Nations Conference on Disarmament Issues. These meetings coincided with the 70th anniversary of the 1945 atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki as well as the founding of the United Nations. But they were held in an atmosphere not necessarily conducive to nuclear disarmament — in the wake of the collapse in May of the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

Former U.S. Secretary of Defense William Perry, a member of the group pushing the CTBT who took part in both conferences, said moves to abolish nuclear weapons have been on the decline and warned against a growing complacency, citing dwindling worldwide concern about a potential nuclear conflict. Given such a situation, it is all the more important for Japan, the sole country to suffer nuclear attacks, and all other nations and civil society to consider what they should do to remove the danger of such a conflict and take concrete steps to abolish nuclear arms.

A draft for the final document of the NPT review conference, which was held under U.N. auspices, contained positive measures, including steps to increase transparency by nations possessing nuclear weapons and setting up a working group to efficiently push for nuclear disarmament. But **the conference ended without adopting the document as the United States, Britain and Canada opposed a proposal in the draft by Egypt and other Arab countries to hold a regional conference on banning weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East because it was viewed as being aimed at Israel's nuclear arsenal.** The aborted document would have expressed for the first time a serious concern over the catastrophic effects of nuclear weapons. It contained this phrase: "The Conference expresses its deep concern at the continued risk for humanity represented by the possibility that these weapons could be used and the catastrophic humanitarian consequences that would result from the use of nuclear weapons."

Fortunately, no nuclear weapons have been used in an attack since the Aug. 9, 1945, atomic bombing of Nagasaki. Still, the world has not been free from the danger of a nuclear conflict for the past 70 years. In the 1962 Cuban missile crisis, the U.S. and the Soviet Union came to the brink of nuclear war. In 1979, a false alarm came at the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) in Colorado that the Soviets had launched a barrage of nuclear missiles at North America, leading the U.S. to temporarily contemplate a retaliatory attack before the alarm was blamed on computer error.

Gov. Hidehiko Yuzaki told the conference on disarmament: "There is a myth that the very existence of nuclear arms ensures peace. But a 100 percent fulfillment of theory is impossible. What will happen when the theory collapses?" Leaders of both the nuclear and non-nuclear weapons countries should pay heed to such questions.

Nuclear-armed nations have justified their possession of the weapons in the name of deterrence. But the risk of human error that could trigger accidental use of nuclear arms cannot be eliminated, nor can the danger of terrorist attacks using nuclear materials. The possibility also exists of hackers penetrating the management and control system for nuclear weapons and triggering their use with false information. Now is the time for the nuclear weapons powers — and countries like Japan and some NATO member that rely on the nuclear umbrella provided by the U.S. — to seriously consider whether they should continue to depend on nuclear deterrence, which cannot be separated from the risk of nuclear war, for their security. The declaration issued by the Group of Eminent Persons for the CTBT should provide a clue for these countries. It called the CTBT "one of the most essential practical measures for nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation." It also urged North Korea, which has conducted three nuclear tests, to "join the international community's efforts toward nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation by refraining from conducting any further nuclear tests."

The treaty, which aims to establish a verifiable global ban on tests of all types of nuclear explosives, has been signed by 183 countries and ratified by 164. For it to enter into force, the treaty must be signed and ratified by the 44 countries that have nuclear reactors for research or power generation. Of these countries, eight, including the U.S., China and India, have not yet ratified it. It's the U.S. that holds the key for the CTBT to take effect. However, ratification there remains difficult due to opposition by Republicans in Congress.

As Perry pointed out, the moves to eliminate nuclear weapons have been on a decline because people do not know or understand the catastrophic consequences of their use. Government leaders, especially the heads of nuclear weapons powers, should go to Hiroshima to listen to the firsthand experience of atomic bombing survivors and visit the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum to learn more about the horrors of nuclear attacks.

Participants in the disarmament conference also discussed subcritical nuclear experiments from the viewpoint of putting a brake on the modernization of nuclear arms. Japan will serve as co-president of the Conference on Facilitating the Entry Into Force of the CTBT to be held in New York late this month.

Together with fellow co-president Kazakhstan, which suffered radiation damage from more than 450 nuclear tests carried out in its territory by the Soviet Union and is serious about nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation, Japan should make strenuous efforts to lead international efforts to put the treaty into force and clearly oppose subcritical nuclear tests. This is a necessary step in the effort to eliminate nuclear weapons.

Painting experiences of hibakusha

September 6, 2015

High school girl creates painting of grandfather's A-bomb experience

http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/social_affairs/AJ201509060011

By GEN OKAMOTO/ Staff Writer

HIROSHIMA--For the past nine years, students at a Hiroshima high school have been involved in a project of drawing and painting the experiences of 23 "hibakusha" (atomic bomb survivors).

The resulting 65 "genbaku no e" (atomic bombing pictures) by students from Hiroshima Municipal Motomachi Senior High School were displayed at an art show held Aug. 15-16 at Gojinsha Wendy Hito Machi Plaza in Naka Ward.

In the intergenerational collaboration, the hibakusha and high schoolers attempt to visually convey the tragic scenes for which words alone cannot suffice: a woman trapped under a collapsed fence asks for help; countless corpses flow downstream with the ebbing tide; and skeletons lie on scorched hospital beds.

One of the paintings on display was created by 17-year-old Miki Utsunomiya based on the experiences told to her by her 85-year-old grandfather, Isao Utsunomiya.

When Miki first heard her grandfather speak about his hibakusha experience, she "wanted to emulate my grandfather's courage and do what I can to help."

She produced an oil painting depicting what her grandfather saw on Aug. 7, 1945, the day after the atomic bomb was dropped, when he went to a department store about 710 meters from the hypocenter.

Miki heard that many people died, so she drew a lot of corpses. When she showed the painting to her grandfather, memories stirred within him and he said, "There were also people howling, their mouths half open. And I'll never forget the wide eyes of a child."

To spur his memory, Miki asked her grandfather to tell the story many times, and she researched documents from the time.

She worked on her painting for three or four months, paying attention to details such as the victims' eyes, mouths and facial expressions. Miki titled her work "Nori kara Hanarenai Anoko no Me" (The eyes of that child I cannot get out of my mind).

"Anyone who sees the painting, even if they're not Japanese, can feel what it means," Miki said. "I want to tell people about my grandfather's memories and the folly of the atomic bomb."

Now, 70 years after the bombing and the end of World War II, her grandfather said he has ambivalent feelings about Japan in the 21st century.

"I've never felt as uncertain as I do now," the hibakusha said. "I want to use the power of the painting to keep telling people not to let another war happen. War turns people into monsters."

A "golden opportunity" for Japan and Kazakhstan?

September 23, 2015

Japan, Kazakhstan urged to lead efforts to realize nuclear test ban

<http://mainichi.jp/english/english/newsselect/news/20150923p2g00m0dm054000c.html>

NEW YORK (Kyodo) -- Japan and Kazakhstan should leverage their respective past experiences as nuclear bombing and test victims to lead as chairs of an upcoming conference pressing eight key countries to ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, a U.N. official said recently.

"Japan has a moral responsibility, Kazakhstan has a moral responsibility with regard to leading the CTBT closer to its entry into force," Lassina Zerbo, executive secretary of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty Organization, told Kyodo News in a one-on-one interview in New York.

"This is a golden opportunity for Japan and Kazakhstan to do more than what has been done for the past 18 years," he said.

Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida and Kazakhstan Foreign Minister Erland Idrissov will co-chair the Sept. 29 conference in New York to facilitate the CTBT's entry into force. It will be held on the sidelines of the U.N. General Assembly.

Zerbo pointed out that **many are aware that Japan was twice the victim of atomic bombs in 1945. But far fewer people know that more than 400 nuclear and thermonuclear tests were carried out in Kazakhstan by the Soviet Union from 1949 to 1989.**

The executive secretary also sees the timing as opportune. In addition to the focus on the commemoration of 70 years since the double atomic bombing in Japan, the 20th anniversary of the CTBT is also approaching.

"For 70 years we haven't banned nuclear weapons. My question to everybody is can we achieve ridding the world of nuclear weapons if we don't deal with the low-hanging fruit that is the CTBT?" he asked. "It is a process that leads to the development of nuclear weapons."

Adopted by the U.N. General Assembly in 1996, the CTBT aims to establish a verifiable permanent global ban on all types of nuclear explosive tests. As of August, it has been signed by 183 countries and ratified by 164.

To enter into force, it must be signed and ratified by the 44 countries with nuclear capabilities. Eight of those states -- the United States, China, Egypt, Iran, Israel, North Korea, India and Pakistan -- have yet to ratify it.

Given the recent developments on the Iran front where negotiations between Tehran and six major powers led to a historic agreement -- preventing the country from acquiring nuclear weapons in exchange for the lifting of sanctions -- Zerbo believes it makes sense for Iran to ratify the treaty.

"The ratification by Iran will be another assurance with teeth that Iran is indeed engaging not only for the 15 years, but forever in that pursuit of peaceful use of nuclear energy only," he said. It could also allay the fears of some who worry about future developments beyond the 15-year span during which Iran is banned from engaging in uranium enrichment and other activities under the accord.

Iran's ratification "creates the condition of trust and confidence in the U.S. context as well" and could also encourage more countries in the region to follow suit, potentially impacting the Middle East as a whole, he said.

"2016 is an important year for the CTBT and as you know anniversaries are a time for reflecting and stepping back (to gauge progress)," Zerbo said, but warned that momentum must be kept up to avoid "treaty fatigue."

Japan & nuclear disarmament

September 24, 2015

EDITORIAL: Japan ideally positioned to push for ambitious nuclear disarmament agenda

<http://ajw.asahi.com/article/views/editorial/AJ201509240018>

The 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), held this spring at U.N. headquarters in New York, failed to produce a formal final document.

The NPT review conference's failure to work out a consensus document has stirred discontent among countries that don't possess nuclear arms, throwing the NPT regime itself into crisis.

U.S. President Barack Obama, who has expressed a strong commitment to pushing the world toward a future without nuclear weapons, has less than 18 months before his term of office expires.

The international community needs to take every opportunity to harness its collective wisdom to provide fresh momentum to the global campaign for the elimination of nuclear weapons.

The 70th session of the U.N. General Assembly began earlier this month. Not surprisingly, the unfolding refugee crisis is high on the agenda of the session.

But the important diplomatic opportunity provided by the session, which brings together the top-level leaders of the nuclear powers, should be used for renewed debate on the issue of nuclear disarmament. As the only nation that experienced atomic warfare, Japan has a major role to play in promoting a global conversation on the topic.

When he visited Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe promised to submit a new draft resolution on the abolition of nuclear weapons to the U.N. General Assembly.

Since 1994, Japan has been continuously presenting such resolutions to the global body. Last year, the General Assembly adopted, with support from 170 countries, a resolution on the total elimination of nuclear weapons submitted by Japan and a host of co-sponsors.

But last year's resolution didn't make a strong call for more aggressive actions for nuclear arms reductions by the United States and Russia, which together own over 90 percent of all nuclear warheads in the world. The document only "encourages them to continue discussions on follow-on measures in order to achieve deeper reductions in their nuclear arsenals."

Experts and nongovernment organizations working for the cause have criticized the resolution as unfocused and ineffective in promoting nuclear disarmament.

This year marks the 70th anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Japan should make a truly ambitious proposal that can bring about a sea change in the movement for nuclear disarmament.

The New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty between the United States and Russia limits the number of each country's deployed strategic nuclear warheads to 1,550. One meaningful new proposal would urge the two nuclear superpowers to cut the number of their nuclear warheads further to a specific figure. Another would call on the other nuclear powers, including China, to refrain from modernizing their nuclear arsenals.

It would also be helpful to propose a new forum for multilateral talks on specific ways to promote cuts in nuclear weapons.

A draft outcome document for the NPT review conference recommended the establishment of a working group to consider "effective measures" for nuclear disarmament within the United Nations.

If this idea is proposed again at the General Assembly session, the door could open to the adoption of the proposal.

Nuclear-weapon states are concerned that the establishment of such a working group could launch a process that could eventually lead to a treaty that bans nuclear arms altogether.

Japan, which is under the nuclear umbrella provided by the United States, is also unwilling to push for a total ban on nuclear weapons.

As a result, Japan has failed to make a significant contribution to the cause amid a growing international chorus of calls for a legal ban on nuclear arms.

If it changes its attitude and makes a bold proposal for sharp cuts in nuclear arms, Tokyo would help accelerate again the international trend toward a nuclear-free world.

World leaders will soon be arriving in New York for speeches at the General Assembly that are slated to start on Sept. 28.

As the country that knows the inhumane nature of nuclear weapons more than any other, Japan should recognize the necessity of a nuclear ban treaty and take actions to persuade nuclear powers to join discussions on the abolition of nuclear weapons.

--The Asahi Shimbun, Sept. 24

Interviews with US experts (1)

INTERVIEW/ Tsuyoshi Hasegawa: U.S. should face up to the 'war crime' of dropping A-bombs on Japan

<http://ajw.asahi.com/article/views/opinion/AJ201509190029>

By MASATO TAINAKA/ Staff Writer

Editor's note: This is part of a series of interviews with U.S. experts on whether the 1945 atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were justified.

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SANTA BARBARA, Calif.--A prominent historian on Russia, who was born in Japan but obtained U.S. citizenship, believes the dropping of atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki amounted to war crimes that should have been brought to and tried by the International Military Tribunal of the Far East.

"Unless we Americans face this fact squarely and come to terms with it, I fear that the mistake of using nuclear weapons could be repeated," Tsuyoshi Hasegawa, a professor at the University of California, Santa Barbara, told The Asahi Shimbun in a recent interview.

But he added that Japanese would be wrong in thinking of themselves solely as victims of the atomic bombs without accepting their nation's responsibility for the war.

"Despite the seemingly close bilateral alliance, Americans and Japanese have the largest perception gap when it comes to the atomic bombs," Hasegawa said. "If the U.S. president were to visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki to express condolences to the victims of the atomic bombings sometime in the future, this would have to be reciprocated by the Japanese prime minister's contrition that Japan was responsible for waging the war."

Excerpts of his interview follow:

* * *

Question: Do you believe it was necessary for the United States to drop the atomic bombs on Japan to induce its surrender?

Hasegawa: The action was not necessary, nor can it be justified. The traditional thinking in the United States rests on the premise that dropping the atomic bombs was the only available option to force Japan to surrender without invading the Japanese mainland, which would have cost numerous lives of U.S. soldiers. But President Harry Truman did have two other options. One was to call on Josef Stalin to sign the Potsdam Declaration and have the Soviet Union enter the war against Japan. The other was to urge Japan to surrender by making it clear that Japan would be allowed to retain its "monarchy under the current dynasty."

Secretary of War Henry Stimson's initial draft for the Potsdam Declaration included wording for allowing Japan to retain its "monarchy under the current dynasty" but Truman intentionally deleted it because he saw the atomic bombs as a means to force Japan to accept unconditional surrender.

Stimson's initial draft also included the possibility of inviting Soviet entry into the war. But Truman wanted to end the war before the Soviets entered, and the atomic bombs provided the means to achieve his goal.

Q: In your book "Racing the Enemy: Stalin, Truman and the Surrender of Japan," you wrote that Japan's "Big Six" leaders, who constituted the Supreme War Council, continued to hope, even after the Aug. 6, 1945, atomic bombing of Hiroshima, that the Soviet Union would remain neutral and act as an intermediary between Japan and the United States. Could you elaborate further?

A: It was downright wishful thinking. Japan's political leaders at the time lacked lucid strategic thinking. Moscow had already decided to enter the war against Japan, but the Japanese leaders placed the last hope to terminate the war on Moscow's mediation. When Japan's highest leaders received the news that an

atomic bomb had been dropped on Hiroshima on Aug. 6, they still clung to the hope to seek Moscow's mediation. The prevailing U.S. interpretation assumes the atomic bombings prompted Japan to surrender, but a careful analysis of the decision-making process in Tokyo to end the war reveals that the more decisive factor was the Soviet Union's entry into the war against Japan. It meant that a diplomatic option, which Japan had counted on, had vanished.

Q: How do you view the Enola Gay controversy of 1995 over a plan by the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum to portray the atomic bombings in a self-reflective light?

A: Arguments can be made on two levels. One is over the U.S. political decision to drop the atomic bombs and the other is over the effects of the bombs at ground level. What was taking place above the mushroom clouds cannot and should not be divorced from the unprecedented human tragedies caused by the bombs on the ground not only immediately but also many years afterward due to the illness from radiation. The question is: Can those who justify dropping the bomb still do so after examining the horrifying effects of the bombs, brushing aside the victims' sufferings as the necessary cost of the war?

The Smithsonian's original exhibit plan was the first attempt in the United States to display what took place below the mushroom clouds, but it only got under the skin of so many U.S. citizens and the exhibit had to be canceled. The atomic bombings were events that many Americans feel a pang of conscience about, so they don't want the subject to be raised. That is exactly why the action had to be justified as a necessary evil.

I believe the use of atomic bombs constitutes a war crime. Unless we Americans face this fact squarely and come to terms with it, I fear that the mistake of using nuclear weapons could be repeated.

Q: Discussions in the United States tend to return to the rationalization of the use of the atomic bombs by asking, "How about the atrocities that the Japanese committed during the war?" How do you respond to that?

A: At issue here is whether the United States is allowed to use whatever means is available that may go against "jus in bello" (acceptable wartime conduct) if it engages in "jus ad bellum" (a just war)--for example, the permissibility of the array of strategic bombings on civilians, such as air raids on Dresden, Germany, and Tokyo, and the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

The use of poison gas is banned under international law because it goes against acceptable wartime conduct. If poison gas is illegal, atomic bombs should also be illegal because they are an even more atrocious weapon.

Q: Do you believe that those who justify the use of atomic bombs do so partly because the United States, not Germany or Japan, used them?

A: Yes, I do. But let me just note that representatives of the Allied Powers got together in Germany to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the (Feb. 13-14, 1945) bombing of Dresden. Gerhard Schroeder, German chancellor at the time, remorsefully said, before he mourned the war dead, that he grieved for the victims of Nazi Germany.

But the prime ministers of Japan, when they attend peace ceremonies in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, only talk about the destruction caused by atomic bombs without expressing remorse over the war waged by Japan. If the U.S. president were to visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki to express condolences to the victims of the atomic bombings sometime in the future, this would have to be reciprocated by the Japanese prime minister's contrition that Japan was responsible for waging the war.

Had Japan surrendered before Aug. 6, there would not have been atomic bombings nor would have the Soviet Union entered the war. I believe it is wrong only to emphasize the victimization of Japanese without first placing the blame on their own leaders who invited these calamities by delaying surrender.

Despite the seemingly close bilateral alliance, Americans and Japanese have the largest perception gap when it comes to the atomic bombs. Most Americans believe that the use of atomic bombs is justified, whereas most Japanese believe they were victimized by the atomic bombs, and the use of the atomic bombs cannot be justified. This perception gap lies at the heart of a somewhat uneasy mistrust under the surface between the two nations.

Q: Do you believe the use of atomic bombs should have been brought before the tribunal as a war crime?

A: Yes, I do. But leaders of the Allied Powers--the United States, the Soviet Union, Britain and France--met after the Aug. 6, 1945, atomic bombing of Hiroshima to discuss standards for a future war crimes tribunal, and they decided to exclude the so-called strategic bombings and atomic bombings from war crimes. An Indian judge, Pal, raised the issue of whether the use of atomic bombs constituted a war crime during the postwar International Military Tribunal for the Far East, only to be ignored.

Q: What do you think U.S. citizens can do with regard to the U.S. responsibility for dropping the atomic bombs?

A: American opinions may differ on whether or not the U.S. dropping the atomic bombs can be justified. But whatever views we may take, it is essential for U.S. citizens to confront and learn about what really took place to the people below the mushroom clouds. Little known is the fact that among the victims were at least 12 U.S. prisoners of war in Hiroshima. Were these American POWs, killed by their own bomb, a necessary price to pay to end the war? A small memorial plaque lies inconspicuously on the wall of the building where they were incarcerated when the bomb was dropped. I visited it last year along with University of California students to lay flowers. Grieving for the American POWs, together with all the people killed by the atomic bombs, may help to achieve mutual reconciliation between the two nations that are at odds with one another in the debate over the atomic bombings.

* * *

Born in Tokyo in 1941, Tsuyoshi Hasegawa, a graduate of the University of Tokyo's Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, earned a Ph.D. from the University of Washington. He became a U.S. citizen in 1976 and now teaches Russian history at the University of California, Santa Barbara.

Interviews with US experts (2)

September 19, 2015

INTERVIEW/ Samuel Walker: U.S., Japan must shed myths of atomic bombs

<http://ajw.asahi.com/article/views/opinion/AJ201509190027>

By MASATO TAINAKA/ Staff Writer

Editor's note: This is part of a series of interviews with U.S. experts on whether the 1945 atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were justified.

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WASHINGTON--American historian Samuel Walker argues that U.S. President Harry Truman used the atomic bomb to end the war as quickly as possible, but dismisses as a “myth” the traditional U.S. theory that the nuclear weapon saved hundreds of thousands of American lives.

“Using the bomb was an easy decision. It’s not anything that Truman or anybody else agonized over,” Walker, author of “Prompt and Utter Destruction: Truman and the Use of Atomic Bombs Against Japan,” told The Asahi Shimbun in an interview. “It took the bomb and the Soviet invasion to convince Japan that it had to surrender.”

Walker said he believes that even if Truman had not dropped an atomic bomb, an American invasion of the Japanese mainland was not “probably” necessary.

“It (an invasion) would have been a terrible event ... but it would not have caused hundreds of thousands of American deaths,” he said.

Walker, who says he is on a “middle-ground” between traditionalists and revisionists with regard to the atomic bomb controversy, urges both the United States and Japan to shed “mythologies” and relearn the history of why the bomb was used.

“In my mind, Truman had no reasonable alternative but to use the bomb,” he said. “In my mind, too, the Japanese should have surrendered long before Hiroshima.”

Excerpts of his interview follow:

* * *

Question: You are known as a post-revisionist among American historians. Why?

Walker: What it meant originally was just those who don’t agree with either the revisionist or the traditional view in pure forms, and they kind of look for answers to the important questions about the use of the (atomic) bombs somewhere in between the two poles.

It is an extremely polarized controversy. On the one side you have those who say that the bomb was absolutely unnecessary because Japan was trying to surrender, and on the other hand, the older, traditional view in this country that Truman had to use the bomb because the only alternative was an invasion.

Q: In your book, you called both arguments a mythology.

A: Yes. Both are wrong, and both depend on misreadings of the evidence, in my view and in the view of most historians. There is just this broad middle-ground now where most scholars are situated, and that is why we have moved away from the two polar views, the two extremes, and that’s a good thing. But there is still a lot of disagreement within this broad middle-ground but on smaller issues, on less important issues, than the polar interpretations.

Q: Your book said a combination of five points is the background of Truman’s decision to drop the atomic bomb. First was to finish the war as early as possible. Second was to justify the cost of the bomb’s development under the Manhattan Project. Third was to send a signal to the Soviet Union. Fourth, there was no motivation for Truman not to use the bomb. Fifth is a kind of a revenge on the enemy. Could you elaborate?

A: The most important of those five by far was to end the war as quickly as possible. The evidence is just absolutely irrefutable. There is no question that that was the priority goal, and the bombs seemed like the most promising way to do that.

There were other means of ending the war. One was to make a statement that guaranteed that the emperor could stay on his throne. Another was to wait for Soviet entry into the war against Japan in Manchuria. Another was to continue the conventional bombing and the blockade, which was just causing enormous death and destruction in Japan and was cutting off vital supplies for the livelihood of the nation.

We had been doing that for six or seven months, and Japan still hadn't surrendered, and no one knew how long it would take with those.

American policymakers probably underestimated the impact of the Soviet invasion of Manchuria. Their view in the summer of 1945 was that that would be helpful. We would like to have the Soviets tie down Japanese troops that then couldn't be shipped back to the homeland to fight against an American invasion if it were necessary.

The potential drawback of guaranteeing the status of the emperor as a figurehead, as a constitutional monarch, was that that would encourage the militants within the Japanese government, by saying, "Look, we just had this really tough battle at Okinawa where we inflicted a lot of American casualties and so now the Americans are softening their stance, so this gives us even more reason to hold out, to continue the war, to inflict as much pain on the Americans as we can."

All of those alternatives, in combination, eventually would have forced a Japanese surrender. But they all had disadvantages, real and potential, whereas the bomb didn't.

The bomb looked like the best way to end the war, maybe. No one was certain that the bomb would end the war, either, but it seemed to be the best, the most likely way to force a Japanese surrender because of the shock value. You have a single bomb just wiping out an entire city, and the hope was that that would be enough to force the Japanese to say, "Hey it's time to end the war."

In that sense, using the bomb was an easy decision. It's not anything that Truman or anybody else agonized over. You found out on July 16 that (the bomb) worked, so why not use it and hope for the best? That is about as much thinking as was ever done about whether or not the bomb should be used. It just wasn't a question as to whether to use it, but to use it as quickly as was available in hopes that that would convince Japan that it had to end the war.

Q: The difference between you and the so-called revisionists is that they argue that the Soviet factor was decisive.

A: Correct.

Q: They also argue that dropping the bomb was not necessary to finish the war.

A: Correct. But this is "the" major fallacy, or one of two major fallacies in their argument.

First, they argue that Japan had decided to surrender, and we now know that is not true.

Japan was incapable of deciding on a surrender before Hiroshima. From what evidence we have, it appears evident that it was Hiroshima that finally convinced (Emperor) Hirohito that the war had to end and more or less convinced him that the war had to end on the basis of the Potsdam (Declaration) if he could remain on his throne. That was the one condition that everyone insisted on.

But the revisionists claim that Japan had decided on surrender if only the emperor could remain as a constitutional monarch. (But it) simply "doesn't hold water," at least according to those scholars who have looked at the Japanese sources. These are not necessarily people who are supporters of Truman. They are scholars who have looked at the Japanese documents and simply say that there is no evidence that Japan had decided before Hiroshima to surrender.

That does raise a question which you just alluded to: "Which was more important?" If we had not used the bomb, would the Soviet invasion itself have been enough? Well, there's no way of knowing and there is no way of telling. There has been some fairly fierce, animated controversy among scholars as to which was more important, but the general consensus now is that it took both. It took the bomb, at least at Hiroshima, and the Soviet invasion. No one is exactly certain what the impact of Nagasaki (was to) Japanese policymakers, but it took the bomb and the Soviet invasion to convince Japan that it had to surrender, both the emperor and then the militants within the Supreme Council for the duration of the war.

There is a historian, Richard B. Frank, who makes an argument that it was Hiroshima that convinced the emperor to surrender, but it was the Soviet invasion that convinced the generals who commanded the armies in China and in other parts of East Asia. He has convinced me that there was a lot of resistance to the emperor's rescript saying that it's time to surrender.

I don't know if that is the final word on that or not, but it's a very interesting argument.

The other major problem with the revisionist position is that they argue that not only had Japan decided to surrender, but that Truman and his advisers knew that. In spite of the fact that they knew that Japan wanted to surrender (under) the sole, reasonable condition that the emperor remain on his throne, they still went ahead and used the bomb when they could have ended the war by simply allowing the emperor to remain. There is an abundance of evidence that shows that in fact, Truman and his advisers were concerned about how long the war was going to go on, that they didn't see any convincing evidence that Japan had decided to surrender. What they saw was from the "Magic" (Japanese diplomatic cable traffic) that they intercepted, that in fact there were plenty of people in powerful positions in Japan who were opposed to surrender. Even if the emperor was allowed to remain, these officials were still calling for other conditions that would've been totally unacceptable to the United States.

Truman, (General George) Marshall, (Secretary of War Henry) Stimson and other leading officials within the American government really had no reason to believe, and certainly did not believe that Japan was on the verge of surrender. They knew that Japan couldn't win the war. The Japanese knew that too, but the question is, "What does it take to force a surrender?"

Q: Those arguments have been gradually getting more understanding among scholars. Are they reasonable ideas? Or do they still have a long way to go?

A: I think the far left, where the die-hard revisionists are, and the far right, where you have the die-hard traditionalists, are pretty small groups now. I don't think anyone, at least anyone who is publishing or doing research or keeping up with the literature, takes revisionism in its pure form seriously.

It's the same with the traditional view that Truman had to authorize the bomb because the only alternative was an invasion that was going to cost hundreds of thousands of lives. I think we know beyond reasonable doubt that that wasn't true.

One, the invasion probably was not going to be necessary. We don't know for certain, but it probably would not have been necessary. Two, even if it had been necessary, it was not going to claim hundreds of thousands of American lives. It would have been a terrible event, for both the Americans who invaded and the Japanese who resisted, but it would not have caused hundreds of thousands of American deaths. But that is still the prevalent view.

Q: Why do both sides--those who believe in the Truman myth and those challenging it--continue to stick to their positions? I went to the Smithsonian Annex. It glorifies the Enola Gay and provides no explanation about the aftermath. I thought that Americans are trying to convey the airplane as a winning weapon.

A: Partly because that's what they grew up with. Certainly that is true of my generation. It's not as though they are against considering new views, but I think it's not a welcoming thing. It's the hard thing to think about, the effects of the atomic bomb.

The Smithsonian obviously got burned so badly (by what happened 20 years ago) that they just simply have the plane out there, and as you say, without any sort of explanation. As I say in my book, when the Enola Gay exhibit was presented after the controversy, it was almost devoid of interpretation, but still not entirely, and what they did have in the way of interpretation tended to reinforce the traditional view.

Q: It's easy for Japanese to understand the so-called revisionist argument because it's very sympathetic to Hiroshima and Nagasaki, but difficult to think that nuclear weapons are necessary to keep the world safe.

For Americans, it would be easy to get used to that idea, but difficult to imagine what happened under the mushroom cloud. What do you think is the difference in their viewpoints?

A: As you know there are those who say that we should just get rid of all nuclear weapons. Ideally, that would be a good thing, but practically I am not sure that it would be because the knowledge is there. If we don't have them, somebody else might.

I guess my point is that once you had the bomb then you are not going to get rid of it, and what you need to do is to find a way to survive it and to live with it. That's the dilemma we have been facing for 70 years or so, or more than 70 years, if you talk about the development of the bomb.

Q: Does that mean that the American people can discuss this objectively and calmly and accept something that they couldn't 20 years ago?

A: Yes, I think that's absolutely true. I mean most people don't think about it. What they do is to see a newspaper article some place or a magazine article, or more likely now something on television, and that is just a snippet.

Again, in my experience, and maybe it's not typical, but I think it is, that most people are willing to listen to other ideas or to learn something new and to make their judgments based on that. I certainly don't think that the American people are so committed to one point of view that they simply refuse to listen to something that they don't necessarily agree with or hadn't heard before. I think it is important, both in this country and in Japan, for people to shed the mythologies and to learn.

Q: To shed the mythologies?

A: Yes, to (get) rid of the mythologies on both sides and to learn the history of why the bomb was used is much more complicated than (what) they have heard, and it's much more ambiguous than they have heard. It's not a question of bad people doing bad things on either side. In my mind, Truman had no reasonable alternative but to use the bomb. In my mind, too, the Japanese should have surrendered long before Hiroshima. I mean they knew they couldn't win the war but they kept fighting, and those who were being slaughtered were their own citizens. It's completely unjustifiable.

Q: What is your goal as a historian after decades of study about Truman's decision? What would you like to achieve?

A: What I would like to achieve is just to educate people about how complicated it was. I would like to educate them about the context in which that decision was made, that World War II was a terrible, terrible war, and that you really have to understand the entire context in which the bomb was used. You also have to understand why it was such an easy decision for Truman and his advisers. That's a long-winded way of saying to educate, to inform and to make people think about it.

Did we have to use the bomb to force a Japanese surrender, a quick Japanese surrender, a prompt Japanese surrender? The answer in my mind is: Yes, we had to.

But that doesn't answer the question of how long the war would have gone on if we hadn't used the bomb. Would the Japanese have surrendered right after the Soviets invaded Manchuria? Probably not.

Would the war have gone on for another two weeks? Would the war have gone on for another 10 weeks?

Would the war have gone on for another three months? We don't know, and there is no way we can know, but it would've gone on longer.

The reason that Truman used the bomb as quickly as he did was that he hoped it would end the war as soon as possible, and, therefore, stop Americans from dying in combat. It didn't have to be a large number. I mean nobody ever told him that using the bomb is going to save hundreds of thousands of lives. They did need to because saving a far, far smaller number of lives for him was ample reason to use it. When I say a "much smaller number," I am talking about maybe 10.

Q: Maybe one. Truman lost his colleague during his service for World War I as you noted in your book.

A: Yes, maybe one because that's what was critical for him. Yes, one American life because that's what you care about. When I talk to students, they say, "Well, how could he do that? How could he kill tens of thousands of Japanese to save a few American lives?" The only answer is: That's the way war is. You don't do those kinds of equations. The idea is just to win the war and get your soldiers home. At least that was true during World War II, and that's the great tragedy of war, but that's the reality of it.

* * *

Samuel Walker, born in 1946, has written books on the history of nuclear energy, including "Prompt and Utter Destruction: Truman and the Use of Atomic Bombs Against Japan."

Interviews with US experts (3)

September 19, 2015

INTERVIEW/ William Perry: Obama should visit Hiroshima to underscore inhumanity of nuclear weapons

<http://ajw.asahi.com/article/views/opinion/AJ201509190025>

By MASATO TAINAKA/ Staff Writer

Editor's note: This is part of a series of interviews with U.S. experts on whether the 1945 atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were justified.

* * *

HIROSHIMA--Former U.S. Defense Secretary William Perry says President Barack Obama should visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki "not to apologize" but to use the experience of being at ground zero of the 1945 atomic bombings as a "vehicle" for getting his message across on the inhumanity of nuclear weapons. "An apology isn't the issue. We want to look forward and not back, and looking forward is that we can use the example of Hiroshima as a vehicle for conveying his message that nuclear weapons should never be used again," Perry told The Asahi Shimbun in an interview here.

Perry has launched his "20-21 project" to educate young people on nuclear issues about "what happened, and how that could affect their lives in the future."

"While they were not living when nuclear weapons were used and were developed, the nuclear weapons are still here and still can affect their lives, so they need to put it not in the back of their minds, but put it in the front of their minds that these weapons are real," he said.

Excerpts of his interview follow:

* * *

Question: In 2007, you published a commentary, "A World Free of Nuclear Weapons," with former secretaries of state George Shultz and Henry Kissinger and former Senator Sam Nunn. As one of the four authors credited with laying the groundwork for Obama's speech of "a world without nuclear weapons" in Prague in 2009, would you advise the president to visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki?

Perry: If he asked, I would tell him he should come. And then, if he should ask me, "What should I say when I come?" I would say, "You do not come to apologize." Many historians argue--and I also believe--

that had we not dropped the bomb, had we instead invaded Japan, there would have been perhaps one million American casualties and many, many millions of Japanese casualties, so many more would have died.

But in a sense, that is kind of missing the point because the use of nuclear weapons at Hiroshima and at Nagasaki made it seem OK. It gave it legitimacy. Happily, no country, including ours, has chosen to repeat that example, so now we have gone 70 years without the use of nuclear weapons, which is good. But the danger is always there, and the precedent has been set.

What I think he should say if he comes to Hiroshima is that Hiroshima stands as an example of the inhumanity of the weapons, and that if we and all nations make a commitment that they will never, ever be used again, then we must take the actions that are necessary to ensure that that happens.

Q: You said you would advise him to come to Hiroshima, not to apologize, but to emphasize the inhumanity of nuclear weapons and to urge the people of the world that nuclear weapons will never be used ...

A: His coming to Hiroshima would evoke the symbolism of Hiroshima, and he could use it as a vehicle for getting his message across that nuclear weapons should never be used again.

Q: But why not apologize and go to the people? Is it because of the political confusion in the United States due to opposition from veterans? What is the stumbling block for Obama to just come over and say what he wants to say?

A: I said that an apology would not be appropriate because most Americans believe, and many historians all over the world believe, that in fact, the use of the atomic bombs saved the lives of millions of people. Had we gone ahead with the alternative of invading--the American military estimates--there would have been one million American casualties and many, many millions of Japanese.

In a sense, in a strictly numerical sense, the bomb saved lives. But it's hard to think of it that way, when you see the devastation of Hiroshima and when you think of the lives lost and the lingering effects to the survivors here.

An apology isn't the issue. We want to look forward and not back, and looking forward is that we can use the example of Hiroshima as a vehicle for conveying his message that nuclear weapons should never be used again, and that there is no way of using nuclear weapons that is not an offense to humanity. So, they should never be used again.

Q: Some American historians say the bombings did not save so many lives, and that it was the Soviet declaration of war that was decisive. Maybe both were needed to finish the war. What is your perspective on this?

A: The historians who look at this issue, if they consider the two alternatives--bombing versus invading--nearly all of them will conclude that the bombing saved lives. But some historians will raise the question, "Wasn't there a third alternative?" and "Isn't there a third choice?" They speculate on the possibility of some other course of action. It's only speculation now.

We cannot know whether any third course of action would have been successful. But I think it is a fair question. I think that is what historians do, they discuss and debate. But I think there is no significant issue that an invasion would have cost many more lives than the bomb.

Q: The perspective on nuclear weapons seems to be changing among the American people. The poll the Pew Research Center conducted this spring found that while the overwhelming majority of people over 65 years old support or justify the atomic bombings, the younger generation has a different mind-set. Maybe they are more objective and maybe they don't know much about history. What is your view?

A: Most young people don't think about the issue at all, and so their opinions don't carry much weight if they haven't really thought about it. If they are not educated on it and if they don't understand what

happened in history, then they don't have the visceral concern about nuclear weapons because they did not live through the Cold War.

Given that view, one of my main objectives is to try to educate the young people about what happened, and how that could affect their lives in the future. While they were not living when nuclear weapons were used and were developed, the nuclear weapons are still here and still can affect their lives, so they need to put it not in the back of their minds, but put it in the front of their minds that these weapons are real.

There are thousands of them in the world and they can cause a huge catastrophe. My goal is to try to advance those ideas so the young people do think about them and understand and learn more about what nuclear weapons are. We have set up a project that we called "20-21." The 20th part of the project focuses on the history and education. The 21st part of it focuses on the decisions we face today in the 21st century.

Q: What perspective do you include in your project as far as the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki are concerned? How would you educate young people in the project?

A: Before they can make intelligent decisions about the 21st century, they have to know what happened in the 20th century. The history is important. Hiroshima is part of that history. It is a very important part of that history. They have to be educated about what has happened, and then what dangers what have happened pose to the world in the future. You looked to the past so you can learn about what you should be doing for the future.

Q: Should the reason why the United States dropped the bombs be included?

A: Yes, I think that should be.

Q: What is that reason in your project? How do you explain that history?

A: By looking at what historians say about what happened and why it happened in the context of what was going on in 1945.

Q: There are revisionist theories and also the traditional approach.

A: Yes.

Q: Do you include both approaches?

A: Oh, yes.

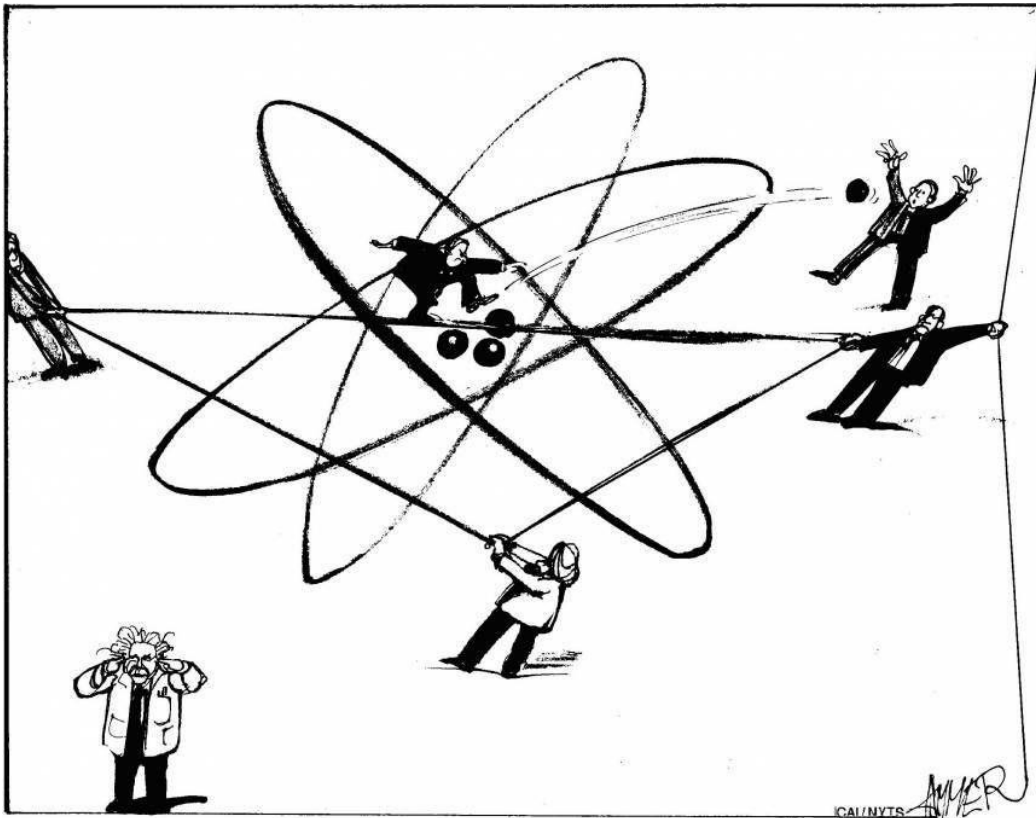
Q: I have heard that U.S. and Japanese officials have been discussing a proposal called "reconciliation swap" that calls for Obama to come to Hiroshima and Nagasaki and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe to go to Pearl Harbor, with both leaders apologizing to each other's country. What do you think of the idea?

A: I myself don't see the benefit a symmetrical exchange of views. I think Obama using Hiroshima as a symbol for the dangers of the future is entirely appropriate. In my mind, Hiroshima stands as a symbol for the inhumanity of nuclear weapons, and an argument for why they should never be used again. It stands independently of other political issues in the world today, and in a sense it is not directly related to the questions of Pearl Harbor and other issues.

* * *

William Perry, born in 1927, served as U.S. defense secretary from 1994 to 1997 during the first Clinton administration. He visited Hiroshima in August to attend the Eminent Persons Group Meeting to accelerate the ratification process of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) and the U.N. Conference on Disarmament Issues.

What use is the humanitarian pledge?



September 25, 2015

Australia should embrace the humanitarian focus on nukes

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2015/09/25/commentary/world-commentary/australia-embrace-humanitarian-focus-nukes/#.VgZnUZfwmic>

by Ramesh Thakur

Canberra – Using the freedom of information law, the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) has obtained a tranche of confidential cables between Canberra and various Australian diplomatic missions around the world in relation to the recent movement regarding the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons. To anyone who has followed Australian policy on the global nuclear debate over the last three to four years, the cables contain no surprises. Rather, they document what is broadly known about Australia's approach to this issue. They underline some positive features of Australian foreign policy but **also confirm the limitations inherent to bureaucracies in looking for imaginative solutions to intractable problems.**

The cables show Australia is a responsible state actor that takes its international commitments very seriously. It is not prepared to go along with a trending popular movement simply for the sake of getting along with the world's "moral majority." It takes its signature on international documents as a commitment that must be honored. If the obligations conflict with existing commitments and policies, Australia will withhold its signature, even at the cost of unpopularity with sections of the domestic audience and the international community.

In this case, Canberra concluded that signing on to the humanitarian consequences statements at the three global summits held so far — in Oslo, Nayarit (Mexico) and Vienna — and at the U.N. General Assembly would be inconsistent with Australia's security alliance with the United States and its stated dependence on the U.S. nuclear umbrella. Australia is to be applauded for holding steadfast to the courage of its convictions and demonstrating national integrity in foreign policy.

Moreover, there is no daylight between what Foreign Ministry officials were writing confidentially to one another and their explanations to concerned outsiders on the reluctance to join the humanitarian impacts movement. Having gone through the 126 pages of declassified and released cables, I can find not one item that surprises or contradicts any explanations and clarifications provided earlier. (My curiosity was piqued but not satisfied at discovering that their report on our own "State of Play" presentation in Geneva by Gareth Evans and I in March has been redacted.) There may be details that were left out — no government can operate a foreign service with 100 percent transparency on internal deliberations and processes — but at no stage and on no single point was I ever misled as to what Australia wanted and why. It is good to have the consistency between public professions and private positions confirmed as a hallmark of a healthy democracy.

That said, there are two major grounds for the Australian opposition to the humanitarian consequences movement. Neither stands up to critical scrutiny and their hold on government policy betrays a failure of rigorous evidence-based analysis. First, like Japan and South Korea, Australia shelters under U.S.-supplied "extended nuclear deterrence," meaning it relies on the threat of a retaliatory nuclear strike by the U.S. to deter a nuclear attack on Australia.

There are several problems with this. Romancing nuclear weapons ignores the complete lack of evidence to indicate that any country ever planned to attack another but was deterred from doing so because the target country had or was defended by nuclear weapons. Nor is there a single example of a nuclear armed country successfully threatening their use to change another's behavior. Indeed in the 1980s Argentina invaded the Falkland Islands knowing Britain had the bomb but fully confident it would not be used even in the face of a British defeat.

The core claim by the humanitarian impacts movement is that it is in the interests of the very survival of humanity that nuclear weapons are never used again, under any circumstances. Canberra can subscribe to the first part but finds the final phrase — "under any circumstances" — deeply problematical and inconsistent with its reliance on extended nuclear deterrence. It would be interesting to do a rigorous analysis of what potential enemy targets — on a realistic list of possible enemies — cannot be destroyed by the extremely powerful conventional U.S. arsenal.

This is true, for example, with North Korea even if Pyongyang were to use a nuclear weapon itself; it could be finished off without Washington having to retaliate with a single nuclear bomb. If all targets can be taken out by the highly lethal and totally effective conventional U.S. firepower, then Australia (and Japan and South Korea, for the analysis largely holds true for them also) could drop the word "nuclear" and rely on U.S. "extended deterrence" for their security.

Without a prior nuclear attack, the reputational damage of first use of the bomb would vastly exceed any conceivable military gains. If deterrence has failed and Australia is hit by the bomb, it would not profit Australia for the Earth to be destroyed with U.S. retaliatory strikes on the attacker that triggers an all-out nuclear war. This would not be a rational strategy of defense but an irrational act of revenge initiating an all-consuming nuclear Armageddon.

In other words, **beyond their sole (if questionable) utility in deterring attack, nuclear weapons cannot in fact be used — under any circumstances. Their very destructiveness robs them of any military or political**

utility, which is an important part of the explanation for why they have not been used again since August 1945.

Australian officials dismiss the humanitarian consequences movement for indulging in symbolic gimmicks at the cost of pursuing a “realistic” and “practical” agenda.

The key phrase animating the movement is “to stigmatize, prohibit and eliminate” nuclear weapons. **Of course they can be eliminated only by those who have them.** But the second item, prohibition, can be broken into two components, possession and use. For states without the bomb to ban their possession by those with nuclear weapons is also an empty gesture. Banning their use without prohibiting possession, however, is an attempt to deepen the stigma and add yet another significant normative barrier to use of the bomb. They are so morally repugnant and abhorrent that their use can never be justified. And every additional stigma adds to the global pressure to reduce numbers, deployments and role of nuclear weapons on the Damascene road to their elimination.

The realistic agenda that Australia favors through practical steps in collaboration with those with the bomb is unobjectionable. But they have been stalemated for so many years now that the nuclear disarmament agenda has fallen far behind the urgency and gravity of the very real threats posed by these most indiscriminately inhumane weapons ever invented. **The humanitarian pledge is a critical step to their elimination, not an exercise in futility.** The growing global support for it reflects, not naivete by its proponents, but frustration with the glacial efforts of the nuclear armed states in containing, minimizing, reducing and eliminating nuclear risks that pose intolerable threats to all of us and should be as unacceptable to Canberra, Seoul and Tokyo as they are to Oslo, Mexico City and Vienna.

Ramesh Thakur is a professor at the Crawford School of the Australian National University.

Grandson of A-bomb crewman writes about hibakusha

September 30, 2015

Grandson of atomic bomb crewman writes of hibakusha horrors

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2015/09/30/national/grandson-atomic-bomb-crewman-writes-hibakusha-horrors/#.VgvgBpfwmic>

by Tomoko Otake
Staff Writer

The grandson of a U.S. serviceman who flew on both planes that dropped atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945 has devoted himself to a project almost unimaginable 70 years ago: spreading the stories of horror experienced by the hibakusha.

Freelance photographer Ari Beser, 27, has documented the voices of the survivors since 2011, when he first visited Japan on a research grant to write a book on his connections to both sides of the atomic bombings. Beser’s grandfather, Jacob, was an army lieutenant and radar specialist who became the only man in the world to fly on both of the B-29s carrying the “Little Boy” and “Fat Man” atomic bombs.

The Baltimore native also had family connections to the niece of an atomic bomb survivor living in Japan. The survivor, a woman from Hiroshima, was friends with his grandfather on his mother's side and underwent reconstructive surgeries on her keloid-scarred face in the U.S. after the war, and later lived in Baltimore through her marriage.

When he first came to Japan in 2011, Beser was planning to write about Jacob and the Japanese survivor. But the scope of his project expanded after he met the victim's niece, who lives in the Kansai region, and was told to listen directly to the stories of other survivors "before it's too late."

Since then, Beser has been interviewing the survivors at length and deepening his understanding of — and friendship with — the hibakusha.

The fruits of his four-year labor are in "The Nuclear Family," a book he self-published through Amazon.com in August.

In the 246-page book, Beser, currently based in Japan as a Fulbright-National Geographic fellow, introduces more than 10 survivors, with each given a chapter to tell their story.

Each tale is preceded by a brief introduction on how Beser met them. In a chapter titled "Keiko Ogura, Eight Years Old," Beser details how Ogura, as a schoolgirl on the outskirts of Hiroshima, saw a sudden flash in the sky on the morning of Aug. 6, 1945, followed by fires spreading all around her and a huge gust of wind that knocked her out.

Ogura's story includes grim descriptions of what happened under the mushroom cloud, with victims passing by "like ghosts, bleeding all over, skin peeling off and hanging from the tips of their fingers," according to the book.

Between the chapters devoted to the survivors' testimonies is a detailed account of how his Jewish grandfather Jacob Beser, burning to fight the Nazis, enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Corps and became part of the top-secret mission to test what insiders called the "gimmick" — the atomic bombs — against the Japanese.

Beser, a graduate of the University of Colorado, Boulder, said he never had a chance to speak about the war directly with Jacob, who passed away when he was only a toddler. But there was a lot of material to work with, as the older Beser gave tons of media interviews and public speeches after the war. Beser depicts his grandfather as a committed military engineer who never regretted what he did but believed war should never happen again.

It's a perspective Beser himself appears to have acquired.

"There wasn't like a right thing that happened in World War II," Beser said during a recent interview in Tokyo. "Everyone was committing crimes. So I don't think he appreciated the fact that people singled out the atomic bomb as the only, one wrong thing in WWII. I think all of it was wrong. I think he did, too. So he wouldn't talk too much about the past feelings, but he was really concerned about the future."

The Japanese survivors Beser approached were willing to share their stories, regardless of his personal background, he said, acknowledging that he has met only a fraction of the 200,000 survivors of the two nuclear bombs.

Now that he has completed the book, Beser said he felt happy fulfilling "a promise" he made to the survivors, to send a message of peace. But he said it was important for everybody in America and Japan — not just those who were directly involved in the war — to find a way to reconcile the tragic past and stem the tide of oblivion.

"For any American who wants to understand the history of atomic bombs, they (the survivors) would be happy to talk to you," he said.

"I do feel that reconciliation doesn't come just from people involved (but also) from everyday citizens," he added. "I think it's important, of course, that people involved and their family descendants are coming to hear their stories. That's amazing that we are allowed to, because, 70 years ago, we couldn't come here."

US urged Japan to delay NPT ratification

October 4, 2015

Nixon administration urged Japan to delay ratifying NPT

http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/politics/AJ201510040020

By TOSHIHIRO OKUYAMA/ Senior Staff Writer

Despite being the only nation victimized by an atomic bomb, Japan took six years to ratify the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty in the 1970s due partly to diplomatic machinations started by U.S. President Richard Nixon.

Declassified documents in both the United States and Japan show Nixon urging Prime Minister Eisaku Sato to move slowly on ratifying the NPT, in part, because Washington was then in the process of normalizing relations with China.

The Nixon administration apparently felt that leaving open the possibility of Japan possessing nuclear weapons would be a form of pressure on Beijing that would be advantageous to Washington in the course of U.S.-China negotiations.

The early 1970s was a time when the United States and Soviet Union were in the midst of the Cold War, and Washington was trying to find a way out of the Vietnam War. With that as a backdrop, the Nixon administration also sought to improve ties with Beijing after many years of an antagonistic relationship. Japan signed the NPT in February 1970 and the treaty went into effect the following month. However, it took another six years until Tokyo ratified it in 1976.

Among the key provisions of the NPT are limiting possession of nuclear weapons to the then five nuclear powers and allowing for the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

Documents of the U.S. National Security Council show that when Nixon met with Sato on Jan. 7, 1972, in San Clemente, Calif., the president told the prime minister to delay ratifying the NPT because that would raise concerns among a potential enemy nation. Other documents related to Henry Kissinger, Nixon's national security adviser, show that the "potential enemy nation" referred to China.

Nixon later told Sato at that same meeting to "forget" that he made the comment about the NPT.

Records of a conversation held in the White House on July 9, 1974, also show Nixon taking a passive stance in promoting the NPT. Nixon was asked by James Hodgson, the newly appointed ambassador to Japan, about his real stance on the NPT.

Nixon, who would resign a month later due to the Watergate scandal, said the U.S. position was to only pose as a proponent of the NPT.

Records in connection with Kissinger also reinforce Nixon's passive stance on the NPT.

Conversation records of the White House and State Department show that in June 1972, about five months after the Sato-Nixon meeting in San Clemente, Kissinger was asked by State Department officials to tell Japanese officials that the U.S. government wanted Japan to ratify the NPT.

However, subsequent records show that after returning to Washington from a Japan visit, Kissinger informed Nixon that he told Sato and Foreign Minister Takeo Fukuda in Tokyo that the U.S. policy remained unchanged from what Nixon urged at San Clemente.

Other records show that Kissinger, who would go on to serve as both national security adviser and U.S. secretary of state under Nixon's successor, Gerald Ford, also felt Japan could be used as a diplomatic card in Washington's dealings with China.

In a March 11, 1974, meeting with Pentagon officials, Kissinger said that the Self-Defense Forces could become a source of concern for China, but would be an effective tool for the United States. Kissinger added his view that Japan could possess nuclear weapons within a decade and that Japan should be utilized to scare other nations.

The United States has long maintained a two-faced approach toward nuclear weapons.

After U.S. President Barack Obama called for a nuclear-free world in a 2009 speech in Prague, the 2010 NPT Review Conference approved a final document that included a specific plan for moving toward nonproliferation. However, no such final document could be agreed upon at the 2015 Review Conference because the United States opposed a Middle East proposal for a nuclear-free zone in that region.

20 years since CTBT

October 4, 2015

It's time for world to ratify CTBT

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2015/10/04/editorials/time-world-ratify-ctbt/#.VhIcKJfwmic>

Next year will mark 20 years since the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test Ban Treaty, which would ban any nuclear explosions conducted on and above Earth — in the atmosphere, underground, in outer space and underwater — was opened for signatures. However, the treaty has not yet entered into force because eight key countries have failed to ratify it.

The Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the CTBT took place last week on the sidelines of the 70th session of the United Nations General Assembly, with Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida and his counterpart from Kazakhstan, Erlan Idrissov, serving as co-chairs.

All of the countries concerned should take meaningful actions by paying attention to what the conference's final declaration said: "We affirm that a universal and effectively verifiable Treaty constitutes a fundamental instrument in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation."

One encouraging sign coming out of the meeting was a declaration by China, one of the eight key countries, that it is making active and continuous efforts to push the ratification procedure. The other seven — the United States, Israel, Iran, Egypt, India, Pakistan and North Korea — should follow China's example. At the same time, other countries should make multi-layered diplomatic efforts to accelerate moves toward the CTBT's goal under the prevailing circumstances.

The treaty, aimed at establishing a verifiable global ban on tests of all types of nuclear explosives, has been signed by 183 countries and ratified by 164 of them. For the treaty to take effect, the 44 countries that

have nuclear reactors for research or power generation must sign and ratify it. Of these, the eight countries already cited have not yet ratified the treaty.

At last week's conference, Kishida, who as a Diet member represents a district in Hiroshima, referred to this year's 70th anniversary of the atomic bombings of his city and Nagasaki and the suffering experienced by nuclear-bomb survivors in underling Japan's historical role and obligation to work with the international community to ban nuclear weapons and tests.

For its part, Kazakhstan has suffered radiation damage from more than 450 nuclear tests carried out in its territory by the Soviet Union and is serious about nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation. Idrissov said: "Its (the CTBT's) entry into force will become an important step forward on the road to a world free of nuclear weapons. Kazakhstan intends to make substantial progress in this important work."

Even though the treaty has not come into force, there are at least two areas in which Japan and other parties to the CTBT can work to help achieve its goal. One is strengthening the International Monitoring System, which is already under operation as part of the CTBT's verification regime. The IMS is designed to detect any nuclear explosion conducted anywhere on Earth. By utilizing advanced technology, seismic, hydroacoustic and infrasound monitoring stations detect nuclear explosions underground, in the oceans and in the atmosphere, respectively, while radionuclide monitoring stations detect radioactive substances released by atmospheric nuclear explosions or vented by underground or underwater blasts.

Eventually, the IMS will consist of 321 monitoring stations and 16 laboratories in 89 countries around the world. Currently more than 280 facilities are in place. Since North Korea has hinted that it will carry out a nuclear test in the near future following the ones in 2006, 2009 and 2013, strengthening the IMS makes sense even from the viewpoint of enhancing security for Japan and other countries in East Asia.

According to Lassina Zerbo, executive secretary of the Preparatory Commission of the CTBT Organization, his organization and China are making preparations for operation of a monitoring station in the country. It is also calling on Iran, which has recently reached a nuclear deal framework agreement with world powers, to offer monitoring-related data.

It will be important for the international community to support the commission's activities as well as to prompt the countries that have not ratified the CTBT to accept establishment and operation of monitoring stations in their territories.

The other area is working out concrete measures designed to solidify the existing moratorium on nuclear test explosions, which all the countries possessing nuclear weapons except North Korea have observed since the 1990s. During the 25th U.N. Conference on Disarmament Issues held in Hiroshima this summer, the participants discussed ways to perpetuate the moratorium.

Besides the moves in these areas, the most important efforts are diplomatic initiatives by the international community to have the U.S. ratify the CTBT at soon as possible. Although the Republican Party, which controls the Congress, is opposed, ratification by the U.S. could help change the behavior of China, Iran, Israel and Egypt in a positive way, thus increasing impetus for the treaty's entering into force.

It is time for Japan to cooperate with other countries to lobby for ratification by the U.S., hopefully while President Barack Obama, who in his April 2009 speech in Prague said that his country "will take concrete steps toward a world without nuclear weapons," is in office. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe should make serious efforts toward the CTBT's early entry into force, which would also help halt nuclear weapons buildups by China and North Korea.

A-bomb site to turn into national park

October 6, 2015

Manhattan Project sites to open as National Park

http://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/english/news/20151006_13.html

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The US government is set to designate facilities where scientists developed the atomic bomb during World War Two as a new national park.

A signing ceremony will be held in Washington on November 10th to formally establish the Manhattan Project National Historical Park.

Under the Manhattan Project, the United States conducted the world's first atomic bomb test in July 1945. US warplanes dropped the bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August that year.

The planned national park will include former nuclear laboratories and plutonium production plants in Los Alamos, New Mexico, Oak Ridge, Tennessee, and Hanford in Washington State.

The US government says the goal of designating the sites as a park is not to celebrate the atomic bomb, but to educate the public about the history and legacy of the Manhattan Project that created it.

Many Americans continue to defend the atomic bombings, saying they were necessary to end the war.

The mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki have asked US authorities to make sure that exhibits at the park provide clear and correct presentation of the damage the bombs have caused.

Nightmare

October 7, 2015

Driven by profit, hatred of U.S., ex-Soviet nuclear smugglers seek Islamist clients

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2015/10/07/world/driven-profit-hatred-u-s-ex-soviet-nuclear-smugglers-seek-islamist-clients/#.VhT2pCvwmos>

by Desmond Butler

AP

CHISINAU – Over the pulsating beat at an exclusive nightclub, the arms smuggler made his pitch to a client: €2.5 million for enough radioactive cesium to contaminate several city blocks.

It was earlier this year, and the two men were plotting their deal at an unlikely spot: the terrace of Cocos Prive, a dance club and sushi bar in Chisinau, the capital of Moldova.

“You can make a dirty bomb, which would be perfect for the Islamic State,” the smuggler said. “If you have a connection with them, the business will go smoothly.”

But the smuggler, Valentin Grossu, was not sure the client was for real — and he was right to worry. The client was an informant, and it took some 20 meetings to persuade Grossu that he was an authentic Islamic State representative. Eventually, the two men exchanged cash for a sample in a sting operation that landed Grossu in jail.

The previously unpublicized case is one of at least four attempts in five years in which criminal networks with suspected Russian ties sought to sell radioactive material to extremists through Moldova, an investigation by The Associated Press has found. One investigation uncovered an attempt to sell bomb-grade uranium to a real buyer from the Middle East, the first known case of its kind.

In that operation, wiretaps and interviews with investigators show, a middleman for the gang repeatedly ranted with hatred for America as he focused on smuggling the essential material for an atomic bomb and blueprints for a dirty bomb to a Middle Eastern buyer.

In wiretaps, videotaped arrests, photographs of bomb-grade material, documents and interviews, reporters found that **smugglers are explicitly targeting buyers who are enemies of the West. The developments represent the fulfillment of a long-feared scenario in which organized crime gangs are trying to link up with groups such as the Islamic State and al-Qaida — both of which have made clear their ambition to use weapons of mass destruction.**

The sting operations involved a partnership between the FBI and a small group of Moldovan investigators, who over five years went from near total ignorance of the black market to wrapping up four sting operations. Informants and police posing as connected gangsters penetrated the smuggling networks, using old-fashioned undercover tactics as well as high-tech gear from radiation detectors to clothing threaded with recording devices.

But their successes were undercut by striking shortcomings: Kingpins got away, and those arrested evaded long prison sentences, sometimes quickly returning to nuclear smuggling, the investigation has found.

For strategic reasons, in most of the operations arrests were made after samples of nuclear material had been obtained rather than the larger quantities. That means that if smugglers did have access to the bulk of material they offered, it remains in criminal hands.

The repeated attempts to peddle radioactive materials signal that **a thriving nuclear black market has emerged in an impoverished corner of Eastern Europe on the fringes of the former Soviet Union.**

Moldova, which borders Romania, is a former Soviet republic.

Moldovan police and judicial authorities shared investigative case files with reporters in an effort to spotlight how dangerous the black market has become. They say a breakdown in cooperation between Russia and the West means that it is much harder to know whether smugglers are finding ways to move parts of Russia’s vast store of radioactive materials.

“We can expect more of these cases,” said Constantin Malic, one of the Moldovan investigators. “As long as the smugglers think they can make big money without getting caught, they will keep doing it.”

The FBI and the White House declined to comment. The U.S. State Department would not comment on the specifics of the cases.

“Moldova has taken many important steps to strengthen its counter nuclear smuggling capabilities,” said Eric Lund, spokesman for the State Department’s bureau in charge of nonproliferation. “The arrests made by Moldovan authorities in 2011 for the attempted smuggling of nuclear materials is a good example of how Moldova is doing its part.”

Wiretapped conversations exposed plots that targeted the United States, the Moldovan officials said. In one case, a middleman said it was essential the smuggled bomb-grade uranium go to Arabs, said Malic, an investigator in all four sting operations.

“He said: ‘I really want an Islamic buyer because they will bomb the Americans.’ “

Uranium offer

Malic was a 27-year-old police officer when he first stumbled upon the nuclear black market in 2009. He was working on a fraud unit in Chisinau and had an informant helping police take down a euro counterfeiting ring stretching from the Black Sea to Naples, Italy.

The informant, an aging businessman, casually mentioned to Malic that over the years, contacts had periodically offered him radioactive material.

“Have you ever heard of uranium?” he asked Malic.

Malic was so new to the nuclear racket that he did not know what uranium was, and had to look it up on Google. He was horrified — “not just for one country,” he said, “but for humanity.”

“Soon after, the informant received an offer for uranium. At about that time, the U.S. government was starting a program to train Moldovan police in countering the nuclear black market, part of a global multimillion dollar effort.

In Malic’s first case, three people were arrested on Aug. 20, 2010, after a sample of the material, a sawed-off piece of a depleted uranium cylinder, was exchanged for cash. That kind of uranium would be difficult to turn into a bomb.

Authorities suspected, but could not prove, that the uranium had come from the melted down Chernobyl reactor in Ukraine, Malic said.

Malic transported the seized radioactive material in a matchbox on the passenger seat of his car. It did not occur to him that the uranium should have been stored in a shielded container to protect him from possible radiation.

When FBI agents came to collect it, they were stunned when he simply proffered the matchbox in his uncovered hand: “Take it,” Malic said.

“Madman!” the American officers exclaimed.

The uranium, fortunately, turned out not to be highly toxic.

Plutonium for free

Several months later, a former KGB informant, Teodor Chetrus, called Malic’s source, the Moldovan businessman. Chetrus told him he had uranium to sell, but was looking for a Middle Eastern buyer.

Unlike Malic’s first case, this one involved highly enriched uranium, the type that can be used to make a nuclear bomb.

Smarter and more cautious than the members of the previous gang, Chetrus was a bit of a paradox to the investigators. He was educated and well dressed, yet still lived in his dilapidated childhood farmhouse in a tiny village on Moldova’s border with Ukraine.

In many of the smuggling cases, the ringleaders insulated themselves through a complex network of middlemen who negotiated with buyers in order to shield the bosses from arrest. In this case, Chetrus was the go-between.

But he had his own agenda. Chetrus clung to a Soviet-era hatred of the West, Malic said, repeatedly ranting about how the Americans should be annihilated because of problems he thought they created in the Middle East.

“He said multiple times that this substance must have a real buyer from the Islamic states to make a dirty bomb,” Malic said.

Chetrus and the informant hammered out a deal to sell bomb-grade uranium to a “buyer in the Middle East” over months of wiretapped phone calls and meetings at Chetrus’ house.

The informant would show up with a recording device hidden in a different piece of clothing each time. On the other side of the road would be Malic, disguised as a migrant selling fruit and grains from a van — watching the house for signs of trouble.

In one early phone call, the informant pressed Chetrus to find out whether he had access to plutonium as well as uranium, saying his buyer had expressed interest, according to wiretaps. But Chetrus was suspicious, and insisted that before big quantities of either substance could be discussed, the buyer had to prove that he was for real and not an undercover agent.

Chetrus’ boss decided to sell the uranium in installments, starting with a sample. If the buyers were plants, he reasoned, the police would strike before the bulk of the uranium changed hands — an acceptable risk.

“I have to tell you one thing,” Chetrus told the informant in a wiretapped phone call. “Intelligence services never let go of the money.”

Eventually they worked out the terms of a deal: Chetrus would sell a 10-gram sample of the uranium for €320,000 (\$360,000). The buyer could test it and if he liked what he saw, they could do a kilogram a week at the same rate — an astonishing €32 million every time until the buyer had the quantity he wanted. Ten kilograms of uranium was discussed — about a fifth of what was used over Hiroshima.

The two later met in the dirt courtyard of Chetrus’s house to discuss plutonium. The informant had a video camera hidden in his baseball cap. Chetrus can be seen in an army-green V-neck, talking animatedly as a rooster squawks in the background.

“For the plutonium,” Chetrus said, “if they prove they are serious people, we will provide the sample for free. You can use a small amount to make a dirty bomb.”

He spread his hands wide. Then waved them around, as if all before him was laid to waste.

Malic found the video chilling. “I was afraid to imagine what would happen if one of these scenarios happened one day.”

Buyer in Sudan

The man behind the bomb-grade uranium deal was Alexandr Agheenco, known as “The Colonel” to his cohorts. He had both Russian and Ukrainian citizenship, police said, but lived in Moldova’s breakaway republic of Trans-Dniester.

A separatist enclave that is a notorious haven for smuggling of all kinds, Trans-Dniester was beyond the reach of the Moldovan police.

In a selfie included in police files, the Colonel is balding, mustachioed, and smiling at the camera.

In June 2011, he arranged the uranium swap. He dispatched a Trans-Dniester police officer to smuggle the uranium to Moldova, according to court documents. At the same time, he sent his wife, Galina, on a “shopping outing” across the border to the capital.

Her job was to arrange a handoff of the uranium to Chetrus.

Galina Agheenco arrived in downtown Chisinau in a Lexus GS-330, parking near a circus. She met the police officer, who handed her a green sack with the uranium inside.

Meanwhile, the informant and Chetrus, sporting a dark suit and striped tie, pulled up at the Victoriabank on the city's main drag in a chauffeur-driven gray BMW X5. Inside the bank, Chetrus inspected a safe deposit box with €320,000, court documents show. He counted the bills and used a special light to check whether they were marked.

Satisfied, Chetrus went to collect the uranium package from the Lexus, where the Colonel's wife had left it. When he turned it over to the informant, the police pounced.

The bust, captured on video, shows officers in balaclavas forcing Chetrus to his knees and handcuffing him. Galina was arrested, too.

But the police officer-turned-smuggler managed to escape back to Trans-Dniester, where he and the Colonel could not be touched by Moldovan police.

The arrests took Malic by surprise. He and the informant had been told that police would allow the sample exchange to go forward, so they could later seize the motherlode of uranium and arrest the ringleaders. Malic was furious. Instead of capturing the gang leaders intent on selling nuclear bomb-grade material to terrorists, his Moldovan bosses had jumped the gun.

"What they did was simply create a scene for the news media," Malic said. "We lost a huge opportunity to make the world safer."

Tests of the uranium seized confirmed that it was high-grade material that could be used in a nuclear bomb. The tests also linked it to two earlier seizures of highly enriched uranium that investigators believed the Colonel was also behind.

A search of Chetrus' house showed just how dangerous the smugglers were. After police made their arrests in Chisinau, Malic combed through documents in the farmhouse.

He found the plans for the dirty bomb. Worse, there was evidence that Chetrus was making a separate deal to sell nuclear material to a real buyer.

Investigators found contracts made out to a Sudanese doctor named Yosif Faisal Ibrahim for attack helicopters and armored personnel carriers, government documents show. Chetrus had a copy of Ibrahim's passport, and there was evidence that Chetrus was trying to help him obtain a Moldovan visa. Skype messages suggested that he was interested in uranium and the dirty bomb plans.

The deal was interrupted by the sting, but it looked like it had progressed pretty far. A lawyer working with the criminal ring had traveled to Sudan, officials said. But authorities say they could not determine who was behind Ibrahim or why he was seeking material for a nuclear bomb. Efforts by journalists to reach Ibrahim were unsuccessful.

Consequences for the smugglers were minimal. Galina Agheenco got a light three-year sentence because she had an infant son; and Chetrus was sentenced to a five-year prison term. Interpol notices were issued for the Colonel and the Trans-Dniester policeman who got away.

Moldovan officials say there were indications from a foreign intelligence agency that the Colonel fled with his infant son through Ukraine to Russia shortly after the bust.

The authorities do not know if the Colonel also took a cache of uranium with him.

"Until the head of the criminal group is sentenced and jailed, until we know for sure where those substances seized in Europe came from and where they were going to, only then will we be able to say a danger is no longer present," says Gheorghe Cavcaliuc, the senior police officer who oversaw the investigation.

Nuclear missiles

In mid-2014, an informant told Malic he had been contacted by two separate groups, one offering uranium, the other cesium. The Moldovan police went directly to the FBI, who backed up their operations. Malic volunteered to work undercover, posing as an agent for a Middle Eastern buyer. He did not have much training, and struggled with his nerves, resorting to shots of vodka before each meeting. He went into them with no weapon — showing a cool face while taming a pounding heart.

The FBI fitted him with a special shirt that had microphones woven into the fabric, so that even a pat-down could not reveal that he was wired. They also set him up in a white Mercedes S-Class to look like a gangster.

It worked. At one point, the unwitting smuggler said in text messages obtained by reporters that his gang had access to an outdated Russian missile system capable of carrying a nuclear warhead. The man said he could obtain two R29 submarine-based missiles and provide technical background on how to use them. Following the same script as in 2011, the team wrapped up the investigation after a sample of 200 grams of unenriched uranium was exchanged for \$15,000 on Dec. 3, 2014. Six people were arrested, five got away.

What worried Malic was what appeared to be a revolving door of smugglers. Three criminals involved in the new case had been taken into custody following the earlier investigations. Two of them had served short sentences and immediately rejoined the smuggling network, helping the new ring acquire the uranium. A third criminal was none other than the man who drove Chetrus to make his uranium deal. The investigators tracked the new uranium for sale to an address in Ukraine. Although they reported it to the authorities, they never heard back.

As Malic's frustration grew, so did the danger to him and his colleagues.

Early this year, at the Cocos Prive nightclub in Chisinau, the stakes became apparent. The middleman, Grossu, warned that his cesium supplier was a retired FSB officer with a reputation for brutality.

If there was any trouble, Grossu told a wired informant, "They will put all of us against the wall and shoot us," Malic recalled.

Grossu's bosses wanted the cesium to reach the Islamic State. "They have the money and they will know what to do with it," he said.

The sellers claimed to have a huge cache of cesium 137 — which could be used to make a dirty bomb. As in previous cases, they insisted that the buyers prove their seriousness by first purchasing a sample vial of less-radioactive cesium 135, which is not potent enough for a dirty bomb.

They were busted on Feb. 19. Grossu and two other men were arrested. The suspected FSB officer and the remaining cesium disappeared.

It is not clear whether the Moldovan cases are indicative of widespread nuclear smuggling operations.

"It would be deeply concerning if terrorist groups are able to tap into organized crimes networks to gain the materials and expertise required to build a weapon of mass destruction," said Andy Weber, former U.S. assistant secretary of defense, who oversaw counter-proliferation until a year ago.

On May 28, the FBI honored Malic and his team at an awards ceremony for the two recent investigations. But by then the Moldovan police department had disbanded the team amid political fallout and police infighting.

Chetrus' five-year prison sentence was supposed to run into next year. But Chetrus' sister said this summer that he had been released in December, which reporters confirmed.

He had served barely three years for trying to sell a nuclear bomb to enemies of the United States.

US & the two Koreas

October 17, 2015

US ready to talk with North Korea 'if it is serious about denuclearization'

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2015/10/17/asia-pacific/politics-diplomacy-asia-pacific/u-s-ready-talk-north-korea-serious-denuclearization/#.VileXivwmos>

by Matthew Pennington

AP

WASHINGTON – The U.S. is ready to negotiate with longtime adversary North Korea as it has with Iran, but Pyongyang has to be serious about abandoning nuclear weapons, President Barack Obama said Friday. Obama was speaking after meeting with South Korean President Park Geun-hye, a close ally, who echoed the U.S. leader's view.

The North has conducted three nuclear tests since 2006 and is developing a mobile ballistic missile that could potentially hit the U.S.

Obama said Iran was prepared to have a "serious conversation" about the possibility of giving up the pursuit of nuclear weapons. He said there is no indication of that in North Korea's case.

International aid-for-disarmament talks with the North stalled seven years ago.

"At the point where Pyongyang says, 'We're interested in seeing relief from sanctions and improved relations, and we are prepared to have a serious conversation about denuclearization,' it's fair to say we'll be right there at the table," Obama told a joint news conference.

However, he added that North Korea's violations of past agreements calls into question its willingness to allow the kind of "rigorous" verification regimes put in place with Iran.

Park's visit follows heightened tensions this summer at the heavily militarized border between the two Koreas, and speculation that North Korea could be planning another nuclear test explosion or a rocket launch into space using ballistic missile technology.

In a joint statement issued after Friday's meeting, the U.S. and South Korea said that if North Korea takes such a step, "it will face consequences, including seeking further significant measures by the U.N. Security Council." The statement also said they will never accept North Korea as a nuclear weapons state.

Park has cultivated closer relations with China as she looks to coax Beijing away from its traditional embrace of Pyongyang.

Last month, she prompted hand-wringing in Washington when she attended a Chinese military parade marking the end of World War II that was snubbed by the leaders of most major democracies.

But Obama said he had no problem with Park meeting Chinese President Xi Jinping, and joked that Xi "was in this room, eating my food," during a state visit to the U.S. last month.

"We want South Korea to have a strong relationship with China, just as we want to have a strong relationship with China. We want to see China's peaceful rise. We want them to be cooperating with us in putting pressure on the DPRK," Obama said, referring to the North's official title, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

But he added that the U.S. expects South Korea to speak out if China fails to abide by international norms and rules.

The U.S. has voiced mounting concerns to Beijing over cybertheft and China's massive island-building in areas of the disputed South China Sea.

Obama and Park discussed the often-touchy relations among China, Japan and South Korea, whose leaders are to hold a long-awaited summit in Seoul in early November. Park said that the summit will be an opportunity to improve South Korea's relations with another key U.S. ally, Japan, which will be welcomed by Washington.

The U.S. retains 28,500 troops in South Korea, a legacy of the 1950-53 Korean War. Obama called the U.S.-South Korean alliance "unbreakable." Park called it "the lynch pin of peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific." Her language may rankle a little with Japan, which is also a critical U.S. ally in the region, hosting nearly 50,000 American troops.

Obama commended Park's handling of an August standoff between the two Koreas, when they threatened each other with war after two South Korean soldiers were wounded by land mines Seoul says were planted by the North. The tensions have since eased, and the two sides have agreed to resume reunions of Korean families divided by the Korean War next week.

The Obama administration has faced criticism from hawks and doves alike for a lack of high-level attention on North Korea, which estimated to have enough fissile material for between 10 and 16 nuclear weapons.

Japan's first dictionary of disarmament published

October 25, 2015

Japan's first full-fledged reference work on disarmament hits the shelves

http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/social_affairs/AJ201510250018

By HIDEKI SOEJIMA/ Staff Writer

Japan's first complete dictionary of disarmament has been published after two years of work, coming in the year marking the 70th anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

The 531-page Disarmament Dictionary was written by 124 authors, most of them members with the **Japan Association of Disarmament Studies (JADS)**, a group of academics established in 2009.

"This is the culmination of an all-out effort by Japanese experts," said Mitsuru Kurosawa, professor of disarmament law at Osaka Jogakuin College, who served as the first chairman of the JADS and led the compilation. "We hope that the public will obtain accurate information about disarmament through this dictionary, and that discussions on the topic will be promoted based on shared understanding."

Compiling and publishing the disarmament reference work was one of the projects envisioned by the JADS.

The association set up working groups on six themes--nuclear disarmament, nuclear nonproliferation, biological and chemical weapons, missiles and space, conventional weapons and exports control.

The dictionary was completed following seven work sessions for its compilation.

Included in the work are authors expounding on the humanitarian approach to nuclear disarmament and the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons, in light of the global trend

focusing on the inhumane nature of nuclear weapons in efforts to reduce stockpiles of nuclear arms.

The dictionary also touches on nuclear power and drones.

The entries are also available in English.

The reference work, published by Shinzansha Publisher Co., is priced at a tax-inclusive 5,400 yen (\$45).

China concerned about Japan's growing plutonium pile

October 21, 2015

China slams Japan's plutonium stockpile, frets about nuke armament

<http://mainichi.jp/english/english/newsselect/news/20151021p2g00m0dm058000c.html>

NEW YORK (Kyodo) -- China's disarmament ambassador blasted Japan on Tuesday for its growing stockpile of nuclear fissile materials, expressing concern they could be used to make nuclear weapons and that there are "political forces" in the country pressing for nuclear armament.

At the U.N. General Assembly's First Committee, which addresses disarmament issues, Japan insisted its handling of plutonium and enriched uranium is for peaceful purposes and remains transparent.

Chinese envoy Fu Cong said in a speech to the committee that Japan's fissile materials inventory is large enough to manufacture more than 1,000 nuclear warheads.

"Over the years, Japan has accumulated a huge amount of sensitive nuclear materials, giving rise to grave risks both in terms of nuclear security and nuclear proliferation," he said, adding that the inventory "far exceeds its legitimate needs."

The Japanese government says its plutonium stock is intended for atomic power generation, although most of the country's reactors have remained offline since the 2011 Fukushima nuclear disaster.

"Some political forces in Japan have continuously clamored for the development of nuclear weapons, claiming that Japan should have nuclear weapons if it wants to be a power that could sway international politics," Fu said.

Speaking to reporters after his speech, Fu claimed that Japan could produce nuclear weapons in an "extremely short" period of time using its stockpile of separated -- or weapons-convertible -- plutonium because of the country's advanced level of technology.

"Japan has everything and the only thing that is missing is the so called political decision," Fu said, noting it is a "very special country" in terms of technological know-how.

He also slammed Japan's nuclear fuel recycling program for atomic power plants, citing the Rokkasho reprocessing plant being built in northeastern Japan, which he says would allow Japan to attain more fissile materials.

"Given the lack of feasible ways to consume these materials, it can be predicted that the imbalance of supply and demand of nuclear materials in Japan will aggravate further," he added.

On China's own nuclear arsenal, Fu said that Beijing adheres to a "nuclear strategy of self-defense" and keeps its nuclear force at "the minimal level required by its national security."

Japan's disarmament envoy Toshio Sano said that Tokyo's efforts to maintain transparency in its nuclear fuel program has been recognized by the international community.

He said Japan operates under the International Atomic Energy Agency's safeguard system and has done so for more than 50 years.

"Japan will continue to adhere to the course that we have taken to date as a peace-loving nation," he said in response to Fu's remarks. He added that Japan maintains its policy focus exclusively on national defense so that it will not become a nuclear power that poses a threat to other countries.

Also on Tuesday, Japan introduced to the committee a draft resolution on the elimination of nuclear weapons aiming for its adoption for the 22nd year in a row, while Austria spearheaded a move to submit a draft motion seeking to outlaw such weapons.

This year's document sponsored by Japan and co-sponsored by around 50 other countries encourages world leaders and young people to visit "the cities devastated by the use of nuclear weapons" and listen to "testimonies of atomic bomb survivors," to raise awareness of the humanitarian impact of the use of nuclear weapons.

The resolution recalls that this year marks the 70th anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Expressing regret over a lack of consensus at the review conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons held in New York this spring, it encourages states to engage in multilateral forums to "explore effective measures necessary for achieving a world free of nuclear weapons."

A call for the establishment of "an inclusive and effective open-ended working group" toward this objective in an earlier draft was struck out, due to a duplication of demand in a resolution by other countries.

Japan had attempted to include an invitation to world leaders and young people to visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the cities atom-bombed by the United States in 1945, in a final document of the NPT review conference but the invitation was dropped due to opposition from China. The conference itself eventually collapsed without an outcome instrument.

Austria, meanwhile, jointly proposed with a group of around 40 countries another draft resolution appealing to states, international organizations and other stakeholders to seek "efforts to stigmatize, prohibit and eliminate nuclear weapons."

Their document is based on a "humanitarian pledge" paper that Austria had introduced at the NPT review conference.

If adopted, it would encourage calls for outlawing nuclear weapons advocated by some nonnuclear countries. Japan, a nonnuclear state, has been reluctant to back a measure to ban the weapons because of protection ensured by the "nuclear umbrella" of the United States.

The committee on disarmament started its annual session earlier this month. It continues through next month as resolutions are voted on before they are put before a plenary General Assembly session in December.

China concerned about Japan's growing plutonium pile (2)

October 22, 2015

China expresses concerns about Japan's potential for building '1,350 nuke warheads'

http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/politics/AJ201510220059

By RYUICHI KANARI/ Correspondent

NEW YORK--China's disarmament ambassador blasted Japan on Oct. 20 at a U.N. committee meeting for its growing stockpile of plutonium, arguing that it could create hundreds of nuclear warheads.

At the U.N. General Assembly's First Committee discussing nuclear disarmament, Chinese envoy Fu Cong claimed that Japan currently possesses a huge amount of plutonium that is "enough to make 1,350 nuclear warheads."

"10.8 tons (of separated plutonium generated from nuclear power plants) are stored on Japanese territory," Fu argued. "Some political forces in Japan have continuously clamored for the development of nuclear weapons."

In the earlier part of his speech, the ambassador from the nuclear power vowed that Beijing will not "engage in any form of a nuclear arms race."

Rebutting Fu's argument, Japan's disarmament envoy, Toshio Sano, said all nuclear substances in his country are utilized only for peaceful purposes.

"All nuclear materials in Japan, including plutonium and highly enriched uranium, has been under the IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency) safeguard for over a half century. And IAEA has concluded that all nuclear material in Japan remain in peaceful activities."

Sano also pointed out that "these efforts of Japan have been widely recognized, not only by the IAEA, but also by the international community."

But Fu noted **Tokyo could become a nuclear-armed nation if Japanese politicians desire it.**

"Once a policy decision is taken, the breakout time for Japan to become a nuclear-weapons state will be extremely short. I hope the world can keep that in mind. Pay due attention to that."

During the meeting, Japan submitted a resolution demanding world leaders visit "the cities devastated by the use of nuclear weapons."

At a review conference of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty this spring, Japan made a similar proposal calling for visits to Hiroshima and Nagasaki, but Beijing fiercely opposed the suggestion by referring to historical issues.

Let hibakusha become a household word

October 21, 2015

In anti-nuke push, Japan wants world to know the word 'hibakusha'

http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/politics/AJ201510210053

By HAJIMU TAKEDA/ Staff Writer

Japan hopes "hibakusha" will become a household term with resonance on a world-wide level.

The word is packed with powerful energy and tragic imagery as it is the Japanese noun meaning “a survivor of the 1945 atomic bombings of Hiroshima or Nagasaki.”

But hibakusha is little known outside of Japan.

In submitting a resolution on the abolition of nuclear weapons to the U.N. General Assembly on Oct. 20, the Japanese government used “Hibakushas” for the first time to mark the 70th anniversary of the atomic bombings of the two cities in the closing days of World War II.

While similar resolutions have been jointly submitted by Japan and other nations since 1994, this year’s resolution particularly calls for political leaders and young people from around the world to listen to the accounts of the terror of nuclear bombings from hibakusha themselves.

Several dozen countries, including the United States, plan to sign the resolution, which was submitted to the U.N. General Assembly’s First Committee that deals with disarmament and security issues.

The Japanese government hopes to collect support from as many countries as possible to make the resolution a vital guideline for the United Nations’ efforts on nuclear disarmament.

During a meeting of the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons in April, Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida called for world leaders to visit his hometown of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

His message was intended to encourage leaders to face up to the heinous consequences of nuclear warfare, but the proposal was not included in the conference’s Final Document because China opposed it, claiming it only emphasized damages incurred on Japan during the war.

To avoid a similar block, Japan’s resolution did not call for the world leaders to visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki and instead said their “visits to the cities devastated by the use of nuclear weapons” should be encouraged.

Pugwash Conference in Nagasaki

November 1, 2015

Int'l confab of scientists begins in Nagasaki to seek nuke abolition

<http://mainichi.jp/english/english/newsselect/news/20151101p2g00m0dm008000c.html>

NAGASAKI (Kyodo) -- Scientists and nuclear experts from around the world gathered in southwestern Japan on Sunday to push for the abolition of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, with this year marking the 70th anniversary of the U.S. atomic bombings of Japanese cities.

Nagasaki, one of the two cities devastated by an atomic bomb at the end of World War II, is hosting for the first time the Pugwash Conference on Science and World Affairs, which originated from calls for such a meeting from eminent scientists such as Albert Einstein about 60 years ago.

With the momentum toward nuclear disarmament seen to have suffered a setback after a U.N. conference on the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty ended in failure in May, organizers hope once again to call attention to the inhumane nature of nuclear arms and encourage dialogue in a world plagued with conflicts.

The five-day international conference, which is the 61st of its kind, brings together nearly 200 participants from about 40 countries, including U.S. and Russian officials and the head of Iran's Atomic Energy Organization, Ali Akbar Salehi, according to the organizers.

On Sunday morning, participants met at the Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum with Yoshiro Yamawaki, 81, an atomic bomb survivor, to hear firsthand about the horrors of nuclear weapons.

Topics to be discussed at the conference include the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons, paths toward a world free of nuclear weapons and risks involved in the civilian use of nuclear energy in light of Japan's Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant disaster triggered by a huge earthquake and tsunami in March 2011.

A declaration will be released on the final day of the event. Some sessions are open to the public, including a speech by Osamu Shimomura, who won the Nobel Prize in chemistry in 2008. He was in a city adjacent to Nagasaki when the atomic bomb was dropped.

The Pugwash Conference takes its name from the location of the first meeting in 1957 in the village of Pugwash in Nova Scotia, Canada.

The stimulus for that gathering was a manifesto issued in July 1955 by British philosopher Bertrand Russell and Einstein that called upon scientists of all political persuasions to assemble to discuss the threat posed by the advent of nuclear weapons.

The Pugwash group won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1995, with its movement praised for serving as a channel of communication between the communist Eastern bloc and Western democracies during the Cold War and diminishing the part played by nuclear arms in international politics.

The Pugwash conference was held twice in Hiroshima in 1995 and 2005.

The United States dropped the first atomic bomb on Hiroshima on Aug. 6, 1945, and the second on Nagasaki three days later. Around 210,000 people are estimated to have died from the attacks by the end of 1945. Japan surrendered on Aug. 15 that year, bringing World War II to an end.

see also :

Nobel-winning conference of scientists seeking abolition of nukes kicks off in Nagasaki

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2015/11/01/world/science-health-world/nobel-winning-conference-scientists-seeking-abolition-nukes-kicks-off-nagasaki/#.VjaYjSt1BLN>

Kyodo

NAGASAKI – Scientists and nuclear experts from around the world gathered in Nagasaki on Sunday to push for the abolition of nuclear arms and other weapons of mass destruction, 70 years since the U.S. atomic bombings of two Japanese cities. [...]

Shimomura recalls dropping of bomb on Nagasaki

November 3, 2015

Japanese Nobel laureate recounts atomic bombing

http://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/english/news/20151104_01.html

Nov. 3, 2015 - Updated 16:54 UTC

A Japanese Nobel laureate has shared his experience of the 1945 atomic bombing of Nagasaki at an international meeting of scientists on abolishing nuclear weapons.

Osamu Shimomura, a co-recipient of the Nobel Prize in Chemistry in 2008, spoke on Day 3 of the Pugwash Conference in Nagasaki on Tuesday.

Shimomura recounted his sighting of the bomber that dropped an atomic device on the city.

He said he spotted the plane when he was working at a factory of the now-defunct Imperial Japanese Navy in Isahaya, a city neighboring Nagasaki.

Shimomura said he saw bodies of A-bomb victims being recovered in the days after Japan had surrendered.

He said the terrible, cruel scene was so shocking that it changed his view of life.

The scientist said that though he has tried to forget the atomic bombing, memories of it are always at the back of his mind and have never faded.

Shimomura also touched on how he felt when he gave a lecture at Los Alamos National Laboratory in the US state of New Mexico in 2013. Scientists at the institution developed the first atomic bombs.

Shimomura noted that none of the young researchers asked him about his experience of the atomic bombing of Nagasaki. He said he got the impression that young people regard the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki as little more than footnotes in history.

Shimomura said many people would have survived if Japan had surrendered 2 weeks earlier. He said war is the root of all evil, and that all he hopes for is a world without conflict and nuclear arms.

US, Britain and France do not support Japan's resolution

November 4, 2015

Japan loses support of U.S., Britain, France for U.N. resolution on abolishing nukes

http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/politics/AJ201511040076

THE ASAHI SHIMBUN

Japan received a shocking wake-up call to global realities on Nov. 2 after going all-out to push its resolution in the United Nations on abolishing nuclear weapons.

The resolution was submitted to the U.N. General Assembly's First Committee that deals with disarmament and security issues. Similar resolutions have been submitted annually since 1994, but **Japan thought it had a better chance this time with 2015 marking the 70th anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.**

Last year, the United States and Britain served as co-sponsors of the resolution.

But this year, those two nations not only declined to co-sponsor the resolution, they also abstained from the vote in the First Committee. France also abstained even though it voted in favor of last year's resolution.

In total, 156 nations voted for the resolution, with three opposed, including China and Russia, both nuclear powers.

After the Nov. 2 vote, Toshio Sano, Japan's disarmament envoy, admitted that Japan's strategy had failed. "There is a major gap in the positions on how to push forward with nuclear disarmament between (nuclear powers and non-nuclear nations)," Sano told reporters in New York.

Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida had stressed that Japan would play a role in bridging the gap between nuclear powers and non-nuclear nations. Instead, Japan saw its goal of realizing a nuclear-free world move further away with the positions taken by the nuclear powers this year.

In this year's resolution, Japan for the first time included the term "hibakushas," or survivors of the atomic bombings, as one way of emphasizing the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons.

The resolution also encouraged leaders of the world to visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki to see for themselves the damage caused by such weapons.

At the same time, Japan tried to gain the support of the nuclear powers for its resolution by not specifying a deadline for abolishing nuclear weapons. Such a stance has been criticized by hibakusha groups as a lukewarm position for the only nation in history to suffer from the dropping of nuclear weapons.

The abstention by the United States must have come as a shock to the Foreign Ministry. Ever since U.S. President Barack Obama himself called for moving toward a nuclear-free world in 2009, the United States has served as a co-sponsor of the U.N. resolutions with Japan and other nations.

The inclusion in this year's resolution of references to the "humanitarian consequences" of nuclear weapons may have led to the change in Washington's position.

After the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons ended in May with no agreement, some non-nuclear powers began calling for a treaty to outlaw nuclear weapons, using the inhumane aspects of the weapons as a major argument.

The nuclear powers, including the United States, have looked warily at such trends, and that may have served as background to the new view of the Japanese resolution.

Meanwhile, China has continued to brush aside Japan's emphasis on the damage caused by the atomic bombs, saying that was the direct result of Japan's war of aggression.

(This article was written by Hajimu Takeda in Tokyo and Ryuichi Kanari in New York.)

"Let Nagasaki be the last"

November 6, 2015

Pugwash forum ends with call for never repeating A-bomb tragedy of Nagasaki

http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/social_affairs/AJ201511060036

THE ASAHI SHIMBUN

NAGASAKI--Scientists, scholars and public figures declared "Let Nagasaki be the last" in an anti-nuclear arms message to wrap up the Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs gathering in a city that was devastated by an atomic bomb 70 years ago.

The Nagasaki Declaration issued Nov. 5 started with that message and went on to urge world leaders, international organizations and society as a whole to jointly work toward a worldwide ban on nuclear weapons.

The declaration marked the end of the five-day conference attended by about 200 scientists, scholars and public figures from about 40 nations.

Conference attendees heard the first-hand experiences of atomic bomb survivors and also discussed possible steps toward abolishing nuclear arms, among other topics. The event was the 61st in the Pugwash series.

"Seventy years after the destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, we are still faced with the imminent dangers posed by thousands of nuclear warheads," the declaration stated.

It also referred to the stalled efforts to push for nuclear disarmament as well as a rash of conflicts in the world.

The declaration urged states with nuclear weapons to commit themselves not only to reductions in their number, but also to completely eliminating weapons of mass destruction.

For non-nuclear-weapon states that depend on a "nuclear umbrella" security guarantee from a nuclear-weapon state, including Japan, the declaration calls for changing their security policies by joining or establishing nuclear weapon free zones.

The world's second atomic bomb was dropped on the city of Nagasaki on Aug. 9, 1945, three days after the first one devastated Hiroshima.

The Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs was founded in 1957 in the village of Pugwash in Nova Scotia, Canada.

(This article was written by Sei Iwanami and Shohei Okada.)

November 6, 2015

Global conference calls for elimination of nuclear weapons, but path remains rocky

<http://mainichi.jp/english/english/newsselect/news/20151106p2a00m0na018000c.html>

The 61st Pugwash Conference on Science and World Affairs ended in Nagasaki on Nov. 5 with scientists and nuclear experts issuing a declaration calling on nuclear powers to eliminate nuclear weapons.

"Let Nagasaki be the last," their declaration stated, referring to the atomic bombing of the city on Aug. 9, 1945.

International society, however, has yet to reach a stage of being able to cooperate to eliminate nuclear weapons. High-ranking government officials from the United States and Russia who attended the conference were aligned in presenting arguments for nuclear deterrence. Nuclear powers have thus left the conference -- a joint winner of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1995 -- facing a thick wall of resistance.

In a news conference after the gathering, Conference President Jayantha Dhanapala stressed the significance of holding the conference in an A-bombed city. He said that talking with survivors of the bombing and debating issues in the conference was a powerful way to underscore the inhumane nature of nuclear weapons. He added that participants had probably felt a need for policies that do not depend on nuclear deterrence.

The conference's "Nagasaki Declaration" picked up on limitations in current international disarmament and nonproliferation fora. It went on to state, "Global initiatives aimed at legally banning nuclear weapons through coalition among states, civil society, and international organizations can play a significant role in eliminating nuclear threats." Additionally, it said, "All states with nuclear weapons must abandon nuclear-weapon system modernization programs."

Dhanapala said it was necessary for conference participants to return to their countries, lobby those in charge of formulating policy, and form links with civil society.

The inaugural Pugwash Conference was held in 1957. The Pugwash Conference was influential in the establishment of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), with scholars from East and West going beyond their countries' stances even during the Cold War period to engage in discussion.

But the path toward the elimination of nuclear weapons remains rocky. This past spring the NPT review conference ended without adopting a final resolution due to opposition between participating countries. Furthermore, on Nov. 2, when the First Committee of the U.N. General Assembly moved to adopt a humanitarian pledge resolution strengthening the legal framework for eliminating nuclear weapons, most nuclear powers opposed the move. Japan, which, despite having suffered A-bomb attacks, is protected by a "nuclear umbrella," abstained.

On the opening day of a full session of this year's conference, U.S. and Russian arms reduction officials appeared and underscored the necessity of nuclear deterrence. Mikhail Ulyanov, director of the Department for Non-proliferation and Arms Control in Russia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, said that immediate elimination of all nuclear weapons was a romantic, unrealistic idea. His comment highlighted the gap separating nuclear armed countries.

With awareness of this situation, the conference's Nagasaki Declaration stated that countries with nuclear weapons "must commit themselves not only to reduce but also to eliminate nuclear weapons." It added, "Non-nuclear-weapon states that depend on extended nuclear deterrence also must support nuclear disarmament and change their security policies."

That said, the declaration has no binding power, and does not include any concrete methods for eliminating nuclear weapons or any goals.

A-bomb survivors were split over the document.

Former Nagasaki University president Hideo Tsuchiyama, 90, commented, "Regrettably, I felt something lacking. All those specialists were there, and I had wanted them to provide more solid suggestions through the conference on how to solve these problems."

In contrast, Yoshiro Yamawaki, 81, who talked about his experiences in the atomic bombing to participants, said, "I'm grateful that there was a clear call for world leaders to heed the call of hibakusha. I want to keep an eye on what kinds of proposals are made in the future, based on this declaration."

Remember your humanity but forget about nuke-free world for now

Pugwash 2015: Remember your humanity, but forget about a nuclear free world for now

Posted: 03 Nov 2015 10:29 PM PST*

Pugwash 2015: Remember your humanity, but forget about a nuclear free world for now

"The person who prays for peace must not hide even a needle, for a person who possesses weapons is not qualified to pray for peace."

-Takashi Nagai, *Towers of Peace* [1]

Remember your humanity, but forget about a nuclear free world for now. That may not be the official line, but it was the take-away message from the Pugwash Conference sessions in Nagasaki on November 1, 2015. Diplomatic niceties and patience were emphasized at this time when "mutual trust and confidence" have declined amid alarming new regional conflicts and refugee crises. The imbalances of economic and military power make nuclear deterrence, with only slow, incremental disarmament, the only safe way to proceed.



Maiden of Peace, Nagasaki Peace Park

One might think that because the Pugwash Conference espouses such high ideals that it has always called for the immediate abolition of nuclear weapons, but it never actually made such a radical demand. The website of the *Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs* includes the following description of the founding of the organization:

During the darkest days of the Cold War, the founders of Pugwash understood the dangers of nuclear weapons. In their efforts to change dangerous policies they became pioneers of a new kind of transnational, "track 2" dialogue. [2]

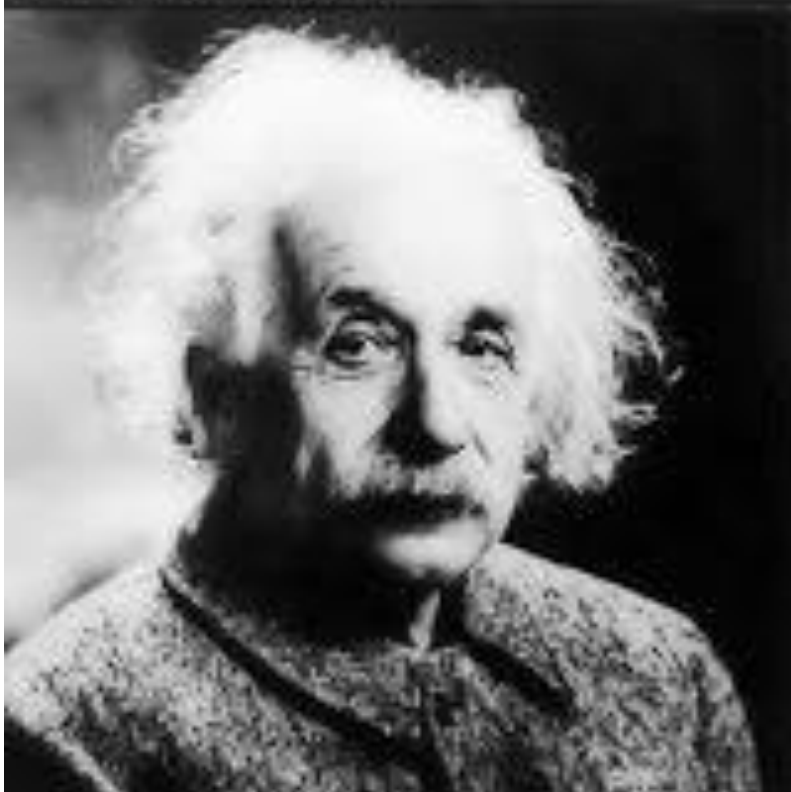
The conference was founded two years after Albert Einstein and Bertrand Russell had released their famous 1955 manifesto, signed by nine other distinguished scientists [3]. It is notable that the manifesto did not stress the abolition of nuclear weapons but rather the abolition of war. It stated, "Although an agreement to renounce nuclear weapons as part of a general reduction of armaments would not afford an ultimate solution, it would serve certain important purposes." A footnote called for this to be a "concomitant balanced reduction of all armaments." The manifesto seemed to assume that nuclear weapons were here to stay and would inevitably be used in war, so the more urgent issue was for nations to accept "distasteful limitations of national sovereignty" and "find peaceful means for the settlement of all matters of dispute between them." Thus one shouldn't expect the Pugwash Conference to be a militant

organization that cannot tolerate the existence of nuclear arsenals. Pugwash and its co-founder were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1995 in recognition of their mission to "diminish the part played by nuclear arms in international politics and, *in the longer run*, to eliminate such arms." [emphasis added] [4]



1955年7月、哲学者のバートランド・ラッセルと物理学者のアルベルト・アインシュタインは「宣言」を掲載し、核兵器廃絶を訴えた。

In July 1955, philosopher Bertrand Russell and physicist Albert Einstein issued a "declaration" calling for the abolition of nuclear weapons.



Other organizations have emerged over the years that have much less patience for elimination "in the long run," so the Pugwash Conferences seem complacent by comparison. At the Pugwash Conference public

session in Nagasaki on November 1, 2015, most of the speakers, aware that they were facing an audience of divided opinions, chose to stick to factual reports and to refrain from expressing their personal conclusions. Government officials preached pragmatism and patience.

There was no opportunity for the audience to challenge the ideas presented or have a dialogue with the speakers. The Q and A sessions were too short, and only the Pugwash members in the front rows were offered chances to ask questions, and most of them were inarticulate and long-winded commentaries. Some of them showed by their questions that they hadn't even been following current events like Fukushima and didn't know some of the basic science and history of the nuclear era, but they have been deliberately asking naïve questions just to make a point.

Meanwhile, the general public and media representatives in the back rows were supposed to only listen and learn. It was ironic to hear the speakers saying repeatedly that the public is woefully ignorant about the issues and needs to be educated, while here members of the public had made the effort to attend yet their questions and comments were not wanted. Why should the public get educated if they are not going to have any influence even at a small conference such as this?

This structure revealed what seems like a serious problem with the Pugwash organization. Perhaps back in 1957 when the US and USSR were playing with hydrogen bombs like they were firecrackers, there really was an urgent need for scientists from both countries to get together in a remote place for private meetings so that they could go back and hopefully influence leadership in their respective countries, but this hardly seems necessary now. This sage-on-the stage approach seems unnecessary now when scientists are even more sidelined from power than they were then. The mass media would flock to a press release concerning the latest iPhone release, but here is no equal to Russell or Einstein today who could assemble the media to take note of an "important announcement."

What is needed now are truly participatory events that are connected with critical voices, citizen groups and contrarians who can break through the polite diplomatic niceties and stale frameworks in order to truly debate the issues—at the risk of offending the dignitaries present. These problems can't be solved if leaders are not going to really make the effort to educate themselves while they educate others, get out of their elite bubbles, then listen and do the hard work of leading by obeying.



Statue of Mother and Child at the Hypocenter, Nagasaki

What follows is a discussion of the session that was held on the afternoon of November 1, 2015. For anyone who has been following the anti-nuclear movement on the street or in the free-for-all of alternative media, blogs, twitter and facebook groups, the stilted and constrained parameters of discussion will come as a shock. All discussions were limited by the realities that have been laid down by the United Nations and the signatories of the Non-Proliferation, Strategic Arms Limitation and Nuclear Test Ban Treaties. The experts who know the history of these treaties can extemporaneously list all the dates, treaty numbers, signatories, conditions and exceptions, with the effect that the listener is left in a state of utter confusion and intimidation. Once one becomes an expert in this subject, one is in that world and can no longer think about lofty ideals and principles. The possible is restricted to only what the treaty history has carved out. So this process is very slow at nuclear disarmament, but it is very effective at disarming anti-nuclear activists who would like to see rapid change.

From the start the anti-nuclear activist is already out of the picture because the basis of all the Non-Proliferation Treaties is that all states which agree to forego the development of nuclear weapons are guaranteed the freedom to develop nuclear energy. This idea became entrenched before the first nuclear catastrophes, and it is always presumed the IAEA will be eternally omnipotent and capable of spotting any attempt to convert plutonium from a civilian waste product to a product that is militarily useful.

Thus the entire framework of global disarmament has no problem with the legacy of Chernobyl and Fukushima Daiichi, and the risk of other future catastrophes is not a concern. The treaties have nothing to say about unsecured uranium mine tailing ponds, depleted uranium weapons, and the seventy-year-old unresolved question of what to do with nuclear waste. Ecological, social and human health impacts are of no concern.

Spent nuclear fuel facilities could be considered as a radiological weapons which nations stupidly build as if they wanted to do a favor for any future aggressors they might have. They spare enemies the need to have a nuclear weapon because all they require is a conventional missile to launch at a nuclear facility. Or it could be that nuclear facilities are supposed to be a kind of a deterrent. Who would want to pillage or occupy a country after it has been turned into a nuclear wasteland? Unfortunately, disarmament treaties pay no attention to this hazard.

One of the first people on the stage was Hitoshi Kikawada, Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan, who repeated the usual government platitudes: the only country ever attacked by nuclear weapons, deeply committed to a world free of nuclear weapons, and so on...

If the Japanese government were serious and it really wanted to change the behavior of the nuclear states, it would break off ties, impose sanctions, and employ any means available to alter the behavior it wanted changed. This is where Japan's hypocrisy becomes obvious. It is hardly "deeply committed" to a nuclear free world at all. It may *wanta* nuclear free world, but it is not a high priority. If Japan were serious, it would come out from the US nuclear umbrella, and, as long as the US insisted on having nuclear weapons, it would not host US military bases on its soil. In interpersonal relations, we call this having the courage of one's convictions. Or it's just the use of simple strategies, like those of a housewife who has various ways of withdrawing affection and cooperation to deal with a wayward husband. But governments seem to have trouble resorting to strategies that are just common sense within personal relations.

States like Japan which live under a nuclear umbrella have been called the "weasel states" [5] of global disarmament talks, and along with the truly non-nuclear states they have always overlooked their power to shun, exclude and sanction the nuclear powers as a strategy for forcing them to change their ways. Perhaps the time has come for them to employ this strategy, but so far they have been divided and ruled, or other considerations force them to stay in their alliances.

At this time of "heightened tension" and "degraded trust" (no one at the conference had the courage to say "Syria" or "Ukraine" explicitly), it was interesting to see two officials from the US and Russia sitting side by side, sticking to their talking points while diplomatically only alluding to the mutual grievances that were on full display at the UN just weeks earlier. [6] But at least they showed up in this forum to respond to an organization that has for 61 years urged the superpowers to seek peaceful solutions and pursue disarmament. In the roster of speakers, the absence of representation from North Korea, Pakistan, Israel and France was notable, and no one from Germany was there to discuss the recent exit from nuclear energy or its diplomacy on the front lines between East and West.

Anita Friedt, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Arms Control, Verification and Compliance, Department of State (USA), claimed that arms reductions are continuing, and went over the progress of the 1990s. She said the expensive upgrades to the arsenal consist of no expansion of capability. Knowing that President Obama has been ridiculed for his Nobel Peace Prize, she insisted that his commitment to a world without nuclear weapons hasn't diminished. She just blamed Russia for not picking up the offer to begin talking about reductions.

She said all this apparently oblivious to Russia's reasons for not being ready for such a step. She would be a rather incompetent official if she didn't know that Russia is displeased with eastward expansion of NATO, overseas "democracy promotion" propaganda in Eastern Europe and even within Russia, [7] the recent decade of illegal wars and drone targeting against sovereign nations (Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, drone in Yemen and Pakistan), and America's enormous expenditures on conventional weapons—including advanced weapons projects that aim to eliminate strategic parity. [8] It's hard to know if she is incompetent or if she was deliberately trying to portray this false image of American innocence. Vladimir Putin has spoken very clearly on these points at recent press conferences, so the Russian point of view is hardly a state secret. [9]

Mikhail Ulyanov, Director of the Department for Non-Proliferation and Arms Control, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Russia, hinted at these grievances but didn't state them explicitly. This was a shame because the audience may not have grasped exactly what he was referring to, and in any case, a good raging argument would have made things interesting. It was mid-afternoon by this time and everyone was getting drowsy. I had to wonder if this is the reason we now have this lamentable state of "degraded trust" over "situations" that couldn't be described. If speakers at such gatherings didn't use such passive-aggressive and evasive language, perhaps they could really talk and work out their differences right there. Every couple knows bad things happen later if one goes to bed angry.

Mr. Ulyanov stressed the important point that one cannot talk of nuclear disarmament without talking about imbalances in conventional weapons. He could have expanded this point by adding that conflicts are ultimately driven by financial interests and financial crises. Russia knows well that the conflicts in Ukraine and Syria involve struggles over energy resources and efforts to bring those countries, and surrounding regions, into Western economic spheres.

Mr. Ulyanov, like his counterpart, also tried to pass off some nonsense as pearls of wisdom. He claimed that we just have to accept that disarmament will proceed slowly because the rapid loss of deterrence could be extremely destabilizing. As evidence he said that deterrence with conventional weapons failed in WWII, and the USSR lost 27 million lives in that war. He said Russia cannot accept ever risking that situation again. However, he left out some crucial details such as the fact that Stalin had purged his military of effective leadership by the time the Nazis invaded. They had no effective conventional deterrence at the time. Also, the harsh conditions imposed on Germany after WWI created the resentment which in turn led to Nazism and militarization. All nations in Europe ignored the build-up and made no attempt to create conventional forces that would deter Germany. The "deterrence failed" argument is very

weak. War can be avoided in numerous ways without a nuclear arsenal, and in fact, the existence of a nuclear arsenal can make nations extremely complacent about building the foundations of lasting peace. Furthermore, if we assume that nuclear deterrence succeeded after WWII, that is only the selfish viewpoint of the superpowers counting the lives of their own citizens. The Third World countries that were devastated by Cold War conflicts might have a different view. We also have to take account of the opportunity costs, and the ecological and human toll of uranium mining and the manufacturing and testing of nuclear weapons, both inside and outside the territories of the US and the USSR. The nuclearization of nations also transformed them into paranoid security states, and the harm to the political and social fabric was carried over to the "war on terror." Finally, while one is busy nuclear deterring, one is running the constant risk of unleashing all the consequences that would follow from the accidental detonation of a nuclear weapon. The logic of deterrence doesn't hold up, but if Russia still wants to insist they need deterrence, then logically it makes sense for all nations—and so the weaker ones need it all the more.

Mr. Kim Won-soo, UN Under Secretary-General and Acting High Representative of Disarmament Affairs (Republic of Korea) was next and spoke of being "deeply disappointed" by the recent failure of NPT Conference (May 2015). [10] For this author it was "deeply disappointing" that he couldn't specifically talk about some of the reasons for the failure. The hesitation to name names and describe specific disagreements amounts to a shrug in which global leadership just seems to wistfully say "stuff happens." Professor Hiromichi Umebayashi, of the University of Nagasaki, discussed his group's proposal for working toward a nuclear free Northeast Asia. This plan seemed fatally flawed. It is hard to understand how they could seriously believe that North Korea would ever consider this plan. It depends on the building of mutual trust among North Korea, South Korea and Japan, with China, Russia and the US promising (scouts honor) to never resort to the use of nuclear weapons in a dispute in this region. One flaw in the plan is the fact that the US is called a "neighboring nation" when its territory is nowhere near Northeast Asia. More importantly, North Korea would never consider this proposal while Japan stays under the US nuclear umbrella and hosts US military bases. Even if the US promised not to use nuclear weapons, its nuclear-armed submarines would still be patrolling the ocean in the region, and the US would be capable of hitting North Korea from afar by other means even if the subs were removed.

Furthermore, North Korea distrusts Japan for all the same reasons as China and South Korea. There is no common agreement about what happened in the region in the early 20th century, and this problem provides a rather weak foundation for building the trust needed for a nuclear weapons-free zone. A nuclear free Northeast Asia seems to require a nuclear free world, so the first step would be for South Korea and Japan to each unilaterally break with the American alliance. This would be the only change that North Korea could believe in. But even then there would be that little problem of Japan's plutonium stockpile in Rokkasho. What, exactly, are their intentions?

The final speaker was Ambassador Akylbek Kamaldinov, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Kazakhstan to Japan, who was honored by Pugwash for his nation's bold decision to give up the nuclear weapons it had on its territory at the breakup of the USSR. Kazakhstan has recently announced that it wants to lead a movement that will see the world free of nuclear weapons by 2045. They stole my idea, but that's OK. They only seem to have the half of it that pertains to nuclear weapons. They take the high ground in speaking about nuclear weapons, but speak little of the widespread contamination throughout the country caused by seven decades of uranium mining. Kazakhstan is a leading producer of uranium, and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe was recently there concluding deals for the future development of nuclear energy. [11]

Progress in nuclear disarmament is impossible if two aspects of the accepted reality continue to go unchallenged. Firstly, nuclear energy is incompatible with a world free of nuclear weapons. Secondly, few countries will want to give up their nuclear deterrence as long as one superpower maintains a global network of military bases and outspends all others combined on conventional military forces. [12] I got the impression that the resolution statement of this year's Pugwash Conference will have little to say about these two obstacles.

It may seem unrealistic to call for such drastic "unrealistic" changes, but history shows that the unchangeable reality can unravel very fast. No one in 1980 predicted the collapse of the Soviet Union by the end of the decade. It is entirely foreseeable that nuclear energy and the American empire will soon have a confrontation with reality. The evident costs and dangers of both are catching up with them.

Notes

[1] This quotation is on display in the Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum. For information about Takashi Nagai see: Shohei Okada, "Film tells story of Nagasaki scientist who cared for A-bomb survivors," *Asahi Shimbun*, February 15, 2014, http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/social_affairs/AJ201402150015.

[2] *History*, Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs, <http://pugwash.org/history/>.

[3] The Russell Einstein Manifesto, Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs, July 9, 1955, <http://pugwash.org/1955/07/09/statement-manifesto/>.

[4] *Oslo Award of the Nobel Peace Prize*, Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs, <http://pugwash.org/1995/12/10/oslo-award-of-the-nobel-peace-prize/>.

[5] "Alice Slater: US is not Honoring its NPT Promise for Nuclear Disarmament," *Farsnews*, October 31, 2015, <http://english.farsnews.com/>.

[6] Luciana Bohne, "A Game of Dice With Russia: 'Do You Realize What You Have Done?'" *Counterpunch*, October 1, 2015, <http://www.counterpunch.org/2015/10/01/a-game-of-dice-with-russia-do-you-realize-what-you-have-done/>

[7] Gerald Sussman, "The Myths of 'Democracy Assistance': U.S. Political Intervention in Post-Soviet Eastern Europe," *Monthly Review*, December 6, 2006, <http://monthlyreview.org/2006/12/01/the-myths-of-democracy-assistance-u-s-political-intervention-in-post-soviet-eastern-europe/>.

[8] "Gorbachev calls US military might 'insurmountable obstacle to a nuclear-free world,'" *Russia Today*, August 6, 2015, <http://www.rt.com/news/311796-gorbachev-nuclear-free-world/>.

[9] "Vladimir Putin Meets with Members of the Valdai Discussion Club. Transcript of the Final Plenary Session of the 12th Annual Meeting," *Valdai International Discussion Club*, October 23, 2015, <http://valdaiclub.com/opinion/highlights/vladimir-putin-meets-with-members-of-the-valdai-discussion-club-transcript-of-the-final-plenary-sess/>.

[10] Editorial, "Disappointing NPT Conference," *Japan Times*, May 26, 2015, <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2015/05/26/editorials/disappointing-npt-conference/#.VjlzqnorK71>.

[11] "Abe Says Japan Can Reap 3 Trillion Yen in Central Asia Projects," *The Japan Times*, October 27, 2015, http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2015/10/27/national/politics-diplomacy/abe-vows-support-kazakhstans-plan-introduce-nuclear-power/#.VjgbG1_XfCQ.

[12] Chalmers Johnson, "America's Empire of Bases," *TomDispatch.com*, January 15, 2004, http://www.tomdispatch.com/blog/1181/tomgram%3A_chalmers_johnson_on_garrisoning_the_planet.

Nuclear nations cling to their A-bombs

November 6, 2015

Editorial: Nuclear powers cling to their A-bombs, letting disarmament efforts wilt

O <http://mainichi.jp/english/english/perspectives/news/20151106p2a00m0na007000c.html>

On Nov. 2, the First Committee of the United Nations General Assembly, dedicated to disarmament issues, voted on a Japan-backed draft resolution on "united action with renewed determination towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons." Especially for the only nation ever to be attacked with nuclear arms, the result was not a truly happy one.

The vote was 156 nations in favor, making 2015 the 22nd year in a row the resolution has been adopted -- a welcome development to be sure. This year, however, the United States, Britain and France -- which had all backed the draft last year -- abstained. Meanwhile, two countries that had abstained last year -- China and Russia -- voted against the resolution this year.

Until 2015, the United States had voted in favor of the resolution every year since Barack Obama took over as president in 2009. This year's version, however, contains some new wording, such as expressing "deep concern at the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons," and encouraging "every effort to raise awareness of the humanitarian impact of the use of nuclear weapons, including through, among others, visits by leaders, youth and others, to the cities devastated by the use of nuclear weapons." The draft also contained the term "hibakusha" (atomic bombing survivors) in the Latin alphabet.

The phrase "humanitarian consequences" appears to have sparked the greatest alarm among all the new additions. The U.S., Britain, France, China and Russia are all permitted to possess nuclear arms under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which calls on all of them to make sincere efforts at disarmament. In recent years, however, they have been going in the opposite direction, expanding and modernizing their atomic arsenals.

That being the case, this document decrying the inhumanity of nuclear arms, and the strengthening movement for a new international legal framework including a treaty to supersede the NPT, has the U.S.

and Britain on guard. Meanwhile, though Japan is calling for nuclear arms reductions under the NPT framework, does it in fact favor a new treaty banning the weapons outright? The U.S., Britain and other atomic powers have likely developed concern about that possibility as well.

The average age of the atomic bombing survivors is now over 80, and it has been 70 years since the bombs were dropped on Nagasaki and Hiroshima. The Japanese government submits the nuclear weapons abolition resolution every year, and it's no surprise that Japan included a few new phrases in the 2015 resolution. **The problem is really the obstinacy of the nuclear powers, those countries clinging to their A-bombs as they make what look like half-hearted efforts at fulfilling their nuclear disarmament duties.**

It is also inappropriate to dredge up historical issues in this discussion. In opposing the resolution, China referenced Japan's wartime aggression, and said that Japan was attempting to use the resolution provision on visiting Hiroshima and Nagasaki as a tool to twist history. At the NPT conference in April and May this year, too, China made similar claims against Japan. But then nuclear disarmament is an issue concerning the entire world, and the future of humanity itself. In this context, using Japan's past misdeeds as ammunition against it in the present is simply meaningless.

Now that the resolution has been approved by the First Committee, it will go to a General Assembly vote in December. No country is likely to change their vote in the meantime, but **we would very much like to see the ostensibly anti-nuclear Obama administration take a proactive stance on the resolution and support it.** The U.S. must be aware of the slow hollowing out of the NPT. If things keep progressing as they are, North Korea will become a nuclear power and the entire anti-proliferation effort will be set adrift. The U.S. should have a greater sense of urgency on this problem.

Meanwhile, even as Japan has sponsored the nuclear abolition resolution, it has taken a far more cautious attitude to a related proposal on a nuclear abolition treaty, maintaining its status as a bridge between the nuclear and non-nuclear powers. As the gap in opinion on either side of that bridge begins to widen, however, Japan will eventually be forced to change its approach. **First of all, it must re-evaluate its own position as mediator, and then be a truly proactive intermediary in the pursuit of nuclear disarmament.**

France fueling nuclear arms race in Asia

November 6, 2015

How France is Fueling Japan and China's Nuclear 'Race'

France is helping to support industrial policies that make no economic sense and potentially threaten a nuclear arms race in Northeast Asia.

by Victor Gilinski and Henry Sokolski

<http://www.nationalinterest.org/feature/how-france-fueling-japan-china%E2%80%99s-nuclear-race-14271>

While the world is focused on Iran and nuclear proliferation in the Middle East, an accelerated round of nuclear plutonium production is about to get started in East Asia. **Areva, the French nuclear export firm, is desperate for business, and therefore is seeking to sell a large plutonium separation plant**

to China. It is simultaneously urging Japan to start commercial operation of its large plutonium recycling complex, despite the unfavorable impact this would have on efforts to rein in worldwide production of nuclear explosives.

The Japanese newspaper *Asahi Shimbun* recently reported that after an October 5 meeting in Tokyo, “Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and his French counterpart Manuel Valls agreed to help ensure Japan maintains its longtime policy to recycle spent nuclear fuel . . .”

Innocent as this statement may sound, behind it is an effort by nuclear bureaucracies in the two countries to keep alive outdated industrial nuclear policies that make no economic sense and potentially threaten a nuclear arms race in Northeast Asia. **That “longtime” Japanese policy involves producing plutonium, many tons of it, for use as fuel. Plutonium, of course, is also used in nuclear weapons, and just a few kilograms suffice for a warhead.** Not surprisingly, China and South Korea take a considerable interest in Japan’s plutonium policy. Japan’s example also threatens the worldwide effort to restrain the spread of nuclear weapons.

Japan is on the verge of operating a large reprocessing plant at Rokkasho that is capable of separating eight tons of plutonium annually from used nuclear fuel. This \$20 billion plant was, from the beginning, a triumph of nuclear ideology over economics. The plutonium fuel it was supposed to produce for Japan’s power reactors would cost several times as much as the uranium fuel it would displace. After Japan’s Fukushima accident and the subsequent closure of its nuclear reactors, only a small fraction of which will return to operation, the Rokkasho plant lost whatever plausibility it had. Japan already owns about thirty-five tons of plutonium separated and stored in France and Britain, and has nearly eleven tons on hand in Japan.

The public awareness of Rokkasho’s unwarranted expense and possible weapon applications has put Japan’s bureaucratically rigid nuclear establishment on the defensive. **The plant’s operation, while still likely, is no longer assured—which is why France is rushing to “help ensure Japan maintains its longtime policy.” France has been involved with Rokkasho through the Areva nuclear industrial group,** and is currently negotiating with China to build a similar reprocessing plant there. A Japanese decision not to operate Rokkasho would reverberate throughout the tightly connected nuclear world, and might well cause China to rethink its reprocessing project. This would be a severe blow to **Areva, which is in deep financial trouble. Its latest reactor projects are ballooning in cost and encountering technical difficulties, and its reprocessing business is losing customers. It needs Japan to stick with its “longtime policy.”**

There is a larger dimension to the French-Japanese nuclear connection. The nuclear establishments in both countries embraced, early and powerfully, the original nuclear dream of using reprocessed plutonium to fuel a new generation of fast breeder reactors that would then take over the generation of electricity. (These would in principle consume all uranium fuel as opposed to current reactors that only use about one percent of it, and so would be a power source with an essentially infinite supply of fuel.) Both countries built prototype breeders but found a commercial shift to these advanced reactors to be technically and economically unrealistic. But both countries continue to cling to their original aspirations.

The French have also learned that **you don’t need economic technology to make lots of money: you just need someone to pay for it. The Japanese played that role over the past few decades.** The nuclear authorities had promised the communities around Japan’s power reactors that the radioactive-

used fuel would be removed. The French were happy to accept it for reprocessing—for a steep price that included an up-front Japanese contribution to pay for building a French reprocessing plant. **Now, France is urging Japan to waste money on its own plant so that France can gain a profit in China. The trouble is that there is more than money at stake.**

However much Japan reiterates its Nonproliferation Treaty pledge to abjure nuclear weapons, and complies with IAEA inspections, **China worries about Japan's nuclear weapons potential.** If Japan goes forward with the Rokkasho operation when economic arguments are decidedly against it, China's concerns will multiply many times over. **Everyone is aware that if the plant were put to military use, it would be capable of producing more than a thousand bombs' worth of plutonium per year. In these circumstances, international inspections cannot provide a "timely" warning of diversion to military use.** Japan's argument, that plutonium drawn from power reactors is not useful for bombs, conflicts with what weapon scientists say.

In any case, if Rokkasho enters commercial operation then China's reprocessing and fast breeder enthusiasts will likely get the green light from their government for a reprocessing contract with Areva. China's plan is to store plutonium fuel for a fast breeder prototype, but the project would also give China the option to rapidly increase the size of its nuclear arsenal, a point not lost on some Japanese strategists.

In the wings is South Korea, which has been pressing the United States to allow it to reprocess plutonium in the US-ROK nuclear cooperation agreement. It sees itself as the equal of Japan and will not stand for being left behind. We may well end up with a spiraling commitment to reprocessing and plutonium fuel in Northeast Asia. This would sharply reduce the margin between nuclear energy use and weapons in both Japan and Korea. And it would give respectability to adopting reprocessing in countries around the world with mixed motives.

This is not the first time that French reprocessing threatened proliferation problems. In the 1970s, the U.S. government realized that French sales of reprocessing technology to Pakistan, South Korea and Taiwan had "path to a bomb" written all over them. The American government jumped in forcefully and managed to persuade France to stop all three deals.

The United States insisted at that time that whatever the industrial arguments, international security should come first. President Gerald Ford stated in 1976 that plutonium should not be separated or used as a fuel—by any country—until we are confident "that the world community can effectively overcome the associated risks of proliferation." Surely we have not reached that point.

It is unsurprising that Japan's nuclear establishment cannot easily give up the course it has been on for many decades, and thus appeals for "understanding" of Japan's unique circumstances. But if nonproliferation standards are to work, they have to be common standards, applicable to all. **Japan needs to take into account that going ahead with Rokkasho will likely initiate an East Asian competition in plutonium stockpiling that will be difficult to control. The right decision is to put Rokkasho on hold. And France should reconsider the dangers of making separated plutonium more widely available. It should stop selling reprocessing technology and stop encouraging others to reprocess.**

Victor Gilinsky is a former US Nuclear Regulatory Commissioner.

Henry Sokolski is executive director of The Nonproliferation Policy Education Center and author of Underestimated: Our Not So Peaceful Nuclear Future (2015).

M. Nasu: "...democracy and peace are like air"

November 11, 2015

Hibakusha: Author ends 'hilarious trio' series due to increasingly oppressive political climate

<http://mainichi.jp/english/english/features/news/20151111p2a00m0na024000c.html>

The no-war policy that has long supported post-World War II Japan is being undermined by newly railroaded security legislation that would allow the overseas dispatch of Japan Self-Defense Forces. Additionally, Japan abstained from a Nov. 5 United Nations General Assembly First Committee vote on a draft resolution that would establish a working group to consider a worldwide nuclear weapons ban treaty.

Amid such circumstances, the 2015 autumn series of "Hibakusha" will kick off with a children's book author who is ending his long-running series, "Zukkoke sannin gumi" (Go, Hilarious Trio!) in response to the recent political and social climate.

Since the first installment of "Go, Hilarious Trio!" featuring 6th-grade boys was published in 1978, the series has sold over 25 million copies, and is the longest-selling children's literature series in the country. The installment set to come out in December, however, will be its last.

At his home in the Yamaguchi Prefecture city of Hofu in late October, author Masamoto Nasu raised his voice. "The security-related legislation is unconstitutional, and must be repealed."

Having experienced the atomic bombing of Hiroshima 3 kilometers away from ground zero as a 3-year-old, and having grown up on democracy-oriented education adopted after the war, Nasu had been vocal about his opposition to the government-backed security legislation, characterizing it as "evil laws that signal a massive shift in our 70-year, post-war history."

Since 2005, the series has featured the three boys as middle-aged men taking on real-life problems that forty-somethings commonly face, such as child rearing and care for aging parents. Their close friendship has remained unchanged over the years, and helps them overcome obstacles.



Children's book author Masamoto Nasu holds up a sample cover of his final installment of the "Go, Hilarious Trio!" series at his home in Hofu, Yamaguchi Prefecture, on Oct. 27, 2015. Nasu is also an anti-nuclear power activist, and has written stories about the Battle of Okinawa and "Manmo-Kaitaku-Seishonen-Giyugun" (Emigration of Youth Troops to Manchuria-Mongolia Areas). (Mainichi)

Children's book author Masamoto Nasu holds up a sample cover of his final installment of the "Go, Hilarious Trio!" series at his home in Hofu, Yamaguchi Prefecture, on Oct. 27, 2015. Nasu is also an anti-nuclear power activist, and has written stories about the Battle of Okinawa and "Manmo-Kaitaku-Seishonen-Giyugun" (Emigration of Youth Troops to Manchuria-Mongolia Areas). (Mainichi)

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<http://mainichi.jp/english/english/features/news/20151111p2a00m0na024000c.html>

While Nasu was working on the latest installment, however, the security legislation was passed in the Diet. As a witness to a changing Japan, Nasu wrote the following afterword:

"The trio was a product of peace and democracy. The reason they go around freely having so much fun was because they lived in a peaceful and democratic Japan. It looks like times are going to change for the worse now. I don't want to portray the trio living in a world like that."

When he was a child, Nasu learned about the Constitution from his father, Shigeyoshi, who passed away in 1978 at the age of 79. Upon Japan's surrender in 1945, Shigeyoshi had quit his job as a teacher and began working for a company. One day, a typically patriarchal Shigeyoshi held a family meeting and declared, "We're entering an age of 'democracy.' If you have anything to say to me, you say it."

In elementary school, all decisions were made through classroom discussions. Nasu recalls that upon hearing that Japan was never going to war again, he thought, "Japan's going to become a great country."

"When I was going through my father's things (after he passed away), I discovered a copy of the Constitution that was falling apart. My father had underlined a lot of passages in red."

Nasu says he wanted to write stories in which children themselves figure out how to solve their problems. The lives led by the trio in his series were based on his own. "We lived through the best era of democracy," Nasu says. The three boys-turned-men were a physical manifestation of that.

However, what he believed long ago would "become a great country" is now turning into a very oppressive country for Nasu. While there was strong public opposition to the security legislation that was passed, public opinion polls show that around one-third of the Japanese public remain uninterested. That scares Nasu. "For many who grew up in the post-war era, democracy and peace are like air."

This is precisely why Nasu is determined to take the next step. The "Go, Hilarious Trio!" series may end, but Nasu has no intention of putting down his pen. He wants younger generations to think about war and peace as their own problems through the war that he will portray in his new stories. That, he believes, is his responsibility as a generation that has declared it would never go to war again.

November 11, 2015 (Mainichi Japan)

Secret US bomb labs turned into national park

November 11, 2015

New U.S. national park marks development of nuclear bomb

<http://mainichi.jp/english/english/features/news/20151111p2g00m0fe046000c.html>

WASHINGTON (AP) -- More than 70 years ago scientists working in secret in the U.S. created the atomic bomb that ended World War II and ushered the world into the nuclear age.

On Tuesday, at a ceremony in a federal building where clandestine plans for the bomb were developed just blocks from the White House, Interior Secretary Sally Jewell and Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz formally established the Manhattan Project National Historical Park.

The park preserves three sites where work on the bomb was completed: Oak Ridge, Tennessee; Hanford, Washington; and Los Alamos, New Mexico.

Jewell, Moniz and other officials said the sites will not glorify war or nuclear weapons, but will tell the story of the three historical sites from a range of perspectives, including the cities in Japan where two nuclear bombs were dropped in 1945.

"It certainly is a celebration that we will be telling the story of these three important historical sites," Jewell told reporters. "It's not necessarily a celebration of the consequences of that, but rather an opportunity to tell that story to a broader audience."

The new park will bring greater awareness of the development of nuclear weapons and energy to a worldwide audience, Jewell and Moniz said.

"The Manhattan Project is an incredible scientific and engineering feat and that's obviously part of the message" of the new park, Moniz said. "But there is also a message about nuclear weapons and Japan. We want to keep driving toward a world free of nuclear weapons, and I think that's a U.S.-Japan shared story."

The complex emotions the new park evokes were evident at Tuesday's ceremony. Reporters and photographers from around the world -- including more than a dozen from Japan -- attended the event at the Interior Department's South Auditorium, as did anti-nuclear activists and representatives of the three communities commemorated by the park. The building, which sits a few blocks from the White House, is where plans for the bomb were first developed in an isolated wooden structure on the roof.

Sen. Lamar Alexander, R-Tennessee, recounted that President Franklin D. Roosevelt summoned former Tennessee Sen. Kenneth McKellar to the White House in 1942. McKellar, a Democrat, was chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, responsible for federal spending.

Roosevelt asked him to "hide a billion dollars in the appropriations bill for a secret project to win the war," Alexander said.

No problem, McKellar responded, according to Alexander. But he had one question: "Just where in Tennessee will the project be located?"

The answer, Alexander noted, was Oak Ridge, where the Manhattan Project was headquartered and uranium was enriched for the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima in August 1945. The Hanford site was used to develop the plutonium dropped days later on Nagasaki, and Los Alamos is where more than 6,000 scientists, engineers and other workers designed and built the atomic bombs.

The bomb was tested in the New Mexico desert in July 1945.

Jewell, who oversees the National Park Service, said **officials are acutely aware of the need to "tell the complete story" of the Manhattan Project, "listening to all sides."**

The park will include the voices of people who experienced devastation in Japan, as well as those "whose lives were spared because the war came to an end," Jewell said. The park also will tell the story of hundreds of thousands of ordinary people who were recruited to work in secret -- often far away from home -- on a project they were told was vital to the war effort, but was never clearly defined.

"It did mark the end of the war, but it left devastation in its wake," Jewell said.

Jewell briefly teared up as she described her mother-in-law's work as a nurse in Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

"It was a powerful experience for her," Jewell said.

While Japan is now one of America's closest allies, that country "felt the consequences" of the Manhattan project, Jewell added. "Your story needs to be told as well," she said, addressing Japanese citizens in the audience.

See also :

New U.S. Manhattan Project national park sites tell story of nuclear weapons from all sides

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2015/11/11/world/three-manhattan-project-sites-now-national-park-including-japan-perspective/#.VkMyi78R-ot>

AP

[WASHINGTON – More than 70 years ago, scientists working in secret in America created the atomic bombs that ended World War II and ushered in the nuclear age...]

Putin will strengthen Russia's nuke strike capacity

November 11, 2015

Russia to beef up nuclear weapons

Nov. 11, 2015 - Updated 05:36 UTC+1

http://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/english/news/20151111_18.html

President Vladimir Putin says he will modernize and strengthen Russia's nuclear strike capability to counter US-led missile defense programs in Asia and Europe.

Putin discussed advancement of military technologies on Tuesday with senior defense officials in Sochi.

He pointed to a US-led missile defense system being deployed in Europe. He said the system is meant to counter a ballistic missile threat from Iran, but noted that the issue of Iran's nuclear program is heading toward a resolution.

He said references to Iranian and North Korean nuclear threats only serve to hide the real intention of a US-led missile shield.

Putin said the real aim of the program is to neutralize the potential of other nuclear powers, and Russia in particular.

He accused Washington of working with allies in Japan and Europe to gain decisive nuclear superiority.

Putin's comments come as relations between Russia and western countries are increasingly strained over Moscow's annexation of the Crimea region in Ukraine and its airstrikes in Syria.

Putin's firm stand on these issues has significant public support.

Peace?

2015/11/17

http://nf2045.blogspot.fr/2015/11/more-ringo-less-john-nuclear.html?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Feed:+NuclearFreeBy2045+%28Nuclear+Free+by+2045?%29

More Ringo, Less John: Nuclear Disarmament Don't Come Easy

*Peace, remember peace is how we make it,
Here within your reach
If you're big enough to take it.
I don't ask for much, I only want your trust,
And you know it don't come easy.*

-Ringo Starr (April 1971)

*Imagine no possessions
I wonder if you can
No need for greed or hunger
A brotherhood of man
Imagine all the people
Sharing all the world...*

-John Lennon (October 1971)

It has become impossible to talk about a world free of nuclear weapons and nuclear power plants without facing the urgent problems that stand in the way. The grim meat-hook realities [1] of conventional war, environmental degradation and inequality lie in wait for anyone who wishes for a world free of nuclear technology. Earlier this year the last Soviet leader, Mikhail Gorbachev, a proponent of the elimination of both nuclear weapons and nuclear power plants, pointed out that American military spending is the greatest obstacle to a nuclear free world. [2] Smaller nations will not even think about reducing their arsenals while one nation maintains its stockpile of thousands of nuclear warheads and has higher military expenditures than all others combined.

If we could imagine a future time when the global network of American military bases was rolled back to the homeland, and American military power shrank to a size sufficient to defend only itself, then other nations might be ready to reduce their arsenals as long as America and Russia agreed to reduce theirs to hundreds of weapons rather than thousands. At this level they would be at parity with other nations, so all nuclear-armed states could start talking seriously about the path to zero. But this is a long, long way off. In spite of Vladimir Putin's recent rebuke telling America to "look at what you have done," [3] the American political establishment has no interest in reading Chomsky and taking that long, hard look in the mirror to see the role it has played in the world over the last century.

Even if we could get to serious talks about nuclear arms reduction, the present framework promotes nuclear energy and promises that all nations that give up nuclear weapons will still have access to the "peaceful" uses of the atom. This path became entrenched in the 1950s during the first serious moves to slow the arms race. At that time even the most dissenting scientists had faith that peaceful applications of nuclear energy could be developed. They had to keep this faith because otherwise the bombs they had made would weigh too heavily on their conscience. Thus no one was motivated to ask the necessary questions about accidents, internal radionuclide contamination, and waste disposal. Nuclear fission was understood 15 years before the structure of DNA was discovered, so no one was thinking much about

what a beta particle could do to a strand of DNA. In the 1950s there had been no commercial nuclear reactor meltdowns, the toxic operations and accidents of uranium mining and nuclear fuel facilities were poorly understood, and environmental awareness was yet to be a political force.

The first signs of an anti-nuclear energy movement emerged in 1957 in California with the successful protests to cancel the proposed Bodega Bay power plant. [4] Later, scientists like Alice Stewart, Ernest Sternglass and John Gofman broke away from the nuclear science establishment when their research findings convinced them that nuclear power posed unacceptable risks to the public. Gofman was notable for being against nuclear power but in favor of nuclear deterrence and underground testing. [5]

Several nuclear reactor and fuel facility accidents occurred during the 1950s and 1960s, but the public knew little or nothing about them. Then the big catastrophes happened at Three Mile Island, Chernobyl and Fukushima. These all had an impact on the political and financial viability of nuclear energy, but they didn't lead the international community to call for a ban on nuclear power. The attitude all along among governments and the United Nations seems to have been that eliminating nuclear weapons is the priority: we will work on that first then maybe talk about nuclear power later—which, at the current pace, means never.

Even though nuclear power plant catastrophes continued to happen every one or two decades while nuclear disarmament talks proceeded, their obvious danger never registered in the official consciousness. No nuclear bombs had been used in war since 1945 and none had been accidentally detonated, but in contrast there were three nuclear power plant catastrophes, all of which came very close to being exponentially worse. With these nightmares staring them in the face, the only lesson the so-called global community seemed to draw from them was that they were miniature demonstrations of how bad a nuclear war would be: look at that exploding nuclear power plant over there, doesn't that remind you of the need to eliminate nuclear weapons?

So this is how far we have to go to get to a nuclear free world, but first there is that problem brought up by Mr. Gorbachev, the same problem that Russel and Einstein emphasized in 1957: Peace first, then get rid of the bombs. [6] The dreadful news out of Syria, Yemen, Turkey, Lebanon and France in recent weeks is a grim reminder of how far humanity is drifting from these goals. Every drone and suicide bomb delays the elimination of nuclear bombs.

The article below is a translation of an interview with the former prime minister of France (2005-2007), Dominique de Villepin, one which was aired on television in 2014, before the Charlie Hebdo murders and the attacks of November 13, 2015. M. de Villepin was also famous for being the foreign minister at the time when France refused to go along with the US invasion of Iraq in 2003. One could easily find some of the same views expressed in other intelligent commentary on world affairs, but this interview is striking for the fact that these are the views of a political conservative. The reasoned approach that is expressed here is no longer found in either of the mainstream political parties in America, and even that radical socialist Bernie Sanders prefers to say as little as possible about foreign policy.

Obviously, it is easy for ex-prime ministers to be critics. If M. de Villepin were in power now, I doubt that he would do anything differently than President Hollande is doing because the situation created by the invasion of Iraq in 2003 has forced Russia, France and others to take drastic measures to reverse the descent into further chaos.

Some Africans, Tutsis in particular, [7] might beg to differ with M. de Villepin's view that "we are peacemakers, interested in dialog, we are mediators." The use of a modal verb (are should be peacemakers...) might have expressed the ideal and aspiration more accurately, but nonetheless, his understanding of the present situation passes as the height of reason in the present political climate. If M. de Villepin is wrong on the historical interpretation, he is right on the ideals. France should stick to its

Enlightenment values because after all else is put aside, these are what need defending from extremists on both sides of the conflict.

Former Prime Minister of France (2005-2007), Dominique de Villepin, spoke about Syria and terrorism during a television interview held on September 29, 2014

translation by Dennis Riches

English version: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TBbSfODzHoI> (with English and French subtitles)

French version: http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x26sp1d_de-villepin-a-propos-de-l-etat-islamique-6-minutes-d-intelligence-et-de-lucidite_webcam (original source, no subtitles)

Dominique de Villepin, you think this war is a mistake. So could you tell us why?

Military interventions, when they are circumscribed, with a targeted and limited objective, can be effective. They are one of the tools that all democracies should be able to use in certain circumstances with reason and in the most restrained way possible, but in the present case, we are engaged—and the head of state has stated it very clearly, and the Americans have told us in the clearest way—we are engaged in a war against terrorism. The war against terrorism cannot be won. There is not even a chance of winning. Failure is guaranteed from the outset. Why? Because terrorism is an invisible hand, mutating, changing opportunistic. We don't know how to fight an invisible hand with the weapons of war.

We have to be capable of using all our mental faculties, statecraft, and peaceful means to break up the solidarity which is forming around these terrorist forces. So we need a political strategy, a political vision, a capacity to think of actions far beyond the use of bombs and military action in the strictest sense. All we know—and there is no counter-example—all we know of this type of war that has been waged for decades, in particular in Afghanistan, is that it leads to failure. There is no example today—Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya—that has not led to more war and more chaos. So we are favoring a situation in which, by war, we hope to do better than in the previous war that we waged, while being aware that this Islamic State has been let loose. We ourselves played a large part in feeding it from one war to the next, from 2003 to 2011, in the support of Syrian rebel groups. We are trapped in a vicious circle.

And it is not only ineffective. It's also dangerous because beyond the Middle East region we have to consider the whole Arab-Muslim world where there are many crises, injuries, and scars. It is in a profound crisis of modernization which has at its heart a violent social crisis which hits the most disadvantaged, and even the middle classes because of the corruption in the petro-states. The region has deep inequalities. Many of the jihadis come from the middle classes. So we are feeding the cycle of escalation. We want to believe that the images of horror that we see here, unfortunately, are a sideshow, a foil to everything else, but this is also a phenomenon with magnetic appeal for certain people. They don't see the same images on the other side of the Mediterranean. They don't see the same spectacle. They don't interpret them in the same way because their identities are wounded. What is true over there, is also, unfortunately, true here in France. The escalation helps in recruiting jihadis over there, and there are consequences here too.

We strike and we hit a terrorist enemy. What is the result? The horror that we know our compatriots are being increasingly assassinated. Where? In the mountains of Algeria. This means that tomorrow all these minorities who, brandishing the banner of Islam, acting in the name of Islam, aren't actually doing so. Islam is not the problem. It is the flag of Islam that is brandished. And these minorities exist in Myanmar, in Malaysia, in Thailand and Indonesia, in all of the Arab world and also in Maghreb and throughout Africa. In all these places these minorities can find common cause. This means that we are helping in this war against terrorism to bring about a crystallization of these diverse groups who are finding ways to link up and escalate the violence to a level that is the most cruel, the most murderous and the most violent because this is the way to attract fighters and financial support. Behind all this there is a race toward death, a race to recruit more jihadis, which is utterly horrifying...

I would like to finish by saying I would like to be able to boast this evening. I would like to be able to say that we are ready. I would like to be able to say that we are not afraid, but this would be a lie because the French are a democratic society that has not engaged in security as other democratic societies have, like the Americans. Overseas communities of Americans are bunkerized and barricaded, in a way no others come close to, and so the risk is much less for them than for us. Israel has chosen the same path. Israeli society has chosen the policy of the security state. But the situation is different in France. We are exposed to the four winds, particularly in Maghreb, in the Middle East, in Asia, and so we are in a vulnerable situation. And what is true there is true in France as well.

So, as a fundamental understanding of this complexity, I would like us to take the lead in a crusade, but I want us to take account of the risks and know that this crusade can't win anything. Right now we are feeding a process of destruction. We are feeding a process of hate. And this is not because there is not anything else to do. There is obviously a lot that we can do, moving in a completely different direction—with a political strategy, accompanied by military strategy, highlighting who should be taking the lead: the countries of the region themselves. There are about 500-600 fighter aircraft in the region that belong to the Gulf countries. They are perfectly capable of leading the response.

But we follow the Americans, who, as always, look for enemies all over the world, and they are engaged in a sort of universal messianic quest. France does not play this role. It is not our vocation. We are peacemakers, interested in dialog. We are mediators. Now we are being used against this objective, led down a path that has no logical end because this war against terrorism has no end. It is a perpetual war. We know that it cannot stop. Hatred leads to more hatred. War leads to more war.

Notes

[1] The phrase originated with Hunter S. Thompson in *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas* (1971).

[2] "Gorbachev calls US military might 'insurmountable obstacle to a nuclear-free world,'" *Russia Today*, August 6, 2015, <http://www.rt.com/news/311796-gorbachev-nuclear-free-world/>.

[3] Luciana Bohne, "A Game of Dice With Russia: 'Do You Realize What You Have Done?'" *Counterpunch*, October 1, 2015, <http://www.counterpunch.org/2015/10/01/a-game-of-dice-with-russia-do-you-realize-what-you-have-done/>

[4] Paula Garb, "Review of Critical Masses: Opposition to Nuclear Power in California, 1958-1978, by Thomas Raymond Wellock." *Journal of Political Ecology: Case Studies in History and Society*, 6 (1999), http://jpe.library.arizona.edu/volume_6/wellockvol6.htm

[5] Pat Stone, "John Gofman: Nuclear and Anti-Nuclear Scientist," *Mother Earth News*, March–April 1981, <http://www.motherearthnews.com/nature-and-environment/john-gofman-anti-nuclear-zmaz81mazraw.aspx>

[6] "The Russell Einstein Manifesto," *Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs*, July 9, 1955, <http://pugwash.org/1955/07/09/statement-manifesto/>.

[7] Chris McGreal, "France's Shame," *The Guardian*, January 11, 2007, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2007/jan/11/rwanda.insideafrica>

A-bomb permanent exhibit in Vienna



November 18, 2015

Permanent A-bomb exhibit opens at U.N. office in Vienna

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2015/11/18/national/history/permanent-a-bomb-exhibit-opens-at-u-n-office-in-vienna/#.VvxJCL8R-ot>

Kyodo

VIENNA – With this year marking the 70th anniversary of the U.S. atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the U.N. Office in Vienna has put on permanent display objects and photos related to the horror of nuclear weapons to push for their elimination.

Similar permanent exhibits have been installed at the U.N. headquarters in New York and at another U.N. Office in Geneva.

The four objects which went on display in Vienna Tuesday include a blistered roof tile and a small bowl on which glass has melted. They were collected after the cities were devastated by the atomic bombings toward the end of World War II.

Visitors can also see photos of the two cities taken shortly after the bombings.

One photo, taken in Hiroshima, shows a building that later came to be called the Atomic Bomb Dome which was left standing amid the devastation.

Around 55,000 people, including children, annually tour the U.N. Office in Vienna, which also houses the International Atomic Energy Agency and a commission preparing for the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty's entry into force.

"We hope to convey the importance of nuclear disarmament that should transcend generations and races," said an official of the Permanent Mission of Japan to the International Organizations in Vienna, which helped arrange the exhibit.

The United States dropped the first atomic bomb on Hiroshima on Aug. 6, 1945, and the second on Nagasaki three days later.

Around 210,000 people are estimated to have died from the attacks by the end of 1945. Japan surrendered on Aug. 15 that year, bringing World War II to an end.

See also:

Permanent A-bomb exhibit opens at U.N. office in Vienna

VIENNA (Kyodo) -- The U.N. Office at Vienna put on permanent display from Tuesday objects and photos related to the horror of nuclear weapons to push for their elimination, with this year marking the 70th anniversary of the U.S. atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. [...]

Nuke disarmament: Reinforced cooperation with Australia

November 22, 2015

Japan, Australia agree to strengthen cooperation in nuke disarmament

<http://mainichi.jp/english/english/newsselect/news/20151122p2g00m0fp007000c.html>

SYDNEY (Kyodo) -- Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida and Australian Foreign Minister Julie Bishop agreed Saturday to strengthen cooperation between the two countries in nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation, Japanese officials said.

In their meeting in Sydney, Kishida and Bishop also confirmed plans to coordinate moves over issues concerning the disputed South China Sea, where China's island-making and other activities have heightened tensions with other countries.

In a joint statement, the ministers of the two countries, which lead a group of nonnuclear states called the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative, renewed their determination to continue cooperation for a world free of nuclear weapons.

The NPDI is a framework launched in 2010 at the initiative of Japan and Australia -- both of which rely on the U.S. nuclear deterrent to protect them from potential enemy attacks.

Noting that this year marked the 70th anniversary of the U.S. atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the ministers voiced their "deep concern" at the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons and encouraged world leaders to visit the two Japanese cities to hear the testimonies of atomic bomb survivors.

The ministers also expressed regret over a U.N. conference in New York earlier this year that was held to review the operation of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty but ended without issuing a consensus document.

Kishida separately agreed with Australia's Cabinet Secretary Arthur Sinodinos to step up collaboration in counterterrorism in the wake of the deadly Paris attacks.

Meanwhile, Defense Minister Gen Nakatani, who is also visiting Australia, met with his Australian counterpart Marise Payne to discuss technological cooperation regarding Australia's plan to acquire a new fleet of submarines for its navy.

November 22, 2015 (Mainichi Japan)

"I cannot allow our issue to end up in this manner"

December 5, 2015

Civilians affected by firebombings plan rallies to keep memories alive

http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/social_affairs/AJ201512050036

THE ASAHI SHIMBUN

It could be called their last war cry.

Civilian victims of U.S. air raids in World War II who never received compensation for their suffering will hold a rally in Tokyo on Dec. 8 to remind postwar generations of what they endured.

Military veterans who fought in World War II, civilians who worked for the imperial Japanese military as well as bereaved family members received government compensation after 1945.

Such payments in the form of pensions through 2013 came to at least 54 trillion yen (\$440 billion), according to a study by the Japan Federation of Bar Associations.

In contrast, **between 300,000 and 500,000 ordinary civilians lost loved ones or were themselves injured in firebombings of Japanese cities. However, these individuals were not eligible for pension payments.**

Moreover, every lawsuit seeking compensation ended in defeat, as did all legislation presented to the Diet to pay out monetary benefits.

With this 70th anniversary year of the end of World War II winding down, **many of those individuals felt they had to make one last symbolic act to ensure their experiences remain a part of the public memory.**

"Many of my fellow members have died. And some have left the movement because they were too busy trying to keep up with their own lives," said Teruko Anno, 76, a homemaker from Sakai, Osaka Prefecture, who once served as a co-plaintiff in a lawsuit seeking an apology and compensation from the central government for damages resulting from U.S. air raids in the closing days of World War II. "But, I cannot allow our issue to end in this manner."

As a child, Anno was badly injured in a U.S. firebombing. She was attending kindergarten in Kagoshima Prefecture in July 1945 when shrapnel from an explosion severed her left knee.

She could only attend the entrance ceremony for elementary school because her mother piggybacked her to school. While she eventually was able to walk using a crutch, her disfigurement made her a victim of bullying.

After reaching adulthood, she hid her disability and worked out of her home as a seamstress.

Her life would change dramatically from **1972 with the formation of a national organization of individuals injured due to the war.** That organization was established through the initiative of Chisako Sugiyama, 100, who lost her left eye and part of her face due to the firebombing of Nagoya.

Despite what happened to her, Sugiyama never hid her injuries and spoke out publicly about the need for compensation. Anno was struck by Sugiyama's positive attitude and joined the movement to collect signatures for a petition calling on the central government to provide compensation.

However, **14 attempts to pass legislation failed as did the lawsuits seeking compensation that were filed in courts around the nation.**

Dec. 8 marks the start of the Pacific War as that is when word reached Tokyo of the success of the Imperial Japanese Navy's attack on Pearl Harbor in Hawaii the day before.

Anno will join others for **a rally near the Diet building seeking government action to help civilians injured during the war.**

When Anno addresses the rally, she plans to say the following: "Were we who have suffered damage wrong? Are you saying we should just bear with what we have gone through?"

(This article was compiled from reports by Senior Staff Writer Tomoaki Ito, Yosuke Watanabe and Jun Sato.)

Japan-sponsored abolition resolution adopted by UN General Assembly

December 8, 2015

U.N. General Assembly passes Japan-led nuclear abolition motion

<http://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20151208/p2g/00m/0dm/029000c>

NEW YORK (Kyodo) -- A Japan-sponsored draft resolution calling for the abolition of nuclear weapons that encourages world leaders and youths to visit the atom bombed cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki was formally **adopted Monday by the U.N. General Assembly, despite failing to secure backing from the United States and other major nuclear powers.**

The majority endorsement in the plenary vote follows the approval of the nonbinding motion by the assembly's First Committee on disarmament and security issues last month.

Japan has introduced resolutions on the same subject for 22 consecutive years, with all of them having been adopted by the General Assembly. The invitation to "the cities devastated by nuclear weapons" was included for the first time.

This year's resolution, which expresses "deep concern at the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons" and urges all member states to work toward "a world free of nuclear weapons," received backing from 166 countries, with 16 abstaining and three casting votes against.

None of the five nuclear powers -- Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States -- endorsed the document.

Britain, France and the United States abstained after having supported the Japan-led initiative last year. **China and Russia, who abstained last year, voted against it this year along with North Korea.**

The five countries hold veto power on the U.N. Security Council as permanent members but it does not extend to the General Assembly.

Noting that 2015 marks the 70th anniversary since "the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki," the resolution encourages "every effort to raise awareness of the humanitarian impact of the use of nuclear

weapons, including through, among others, visits by leaders, youth and others, to the cities devastated by the use of nuclear weapons, and testimonies of the atomic bomb survivors."

At the First Committee session on Nov. 2 where the draft passed with 156 votes, Beijing's Ambassador for Disarmament Affairs Fu Cong criticized the reference as an attempt by Japan to portray itself as a victim of World War II and elide "the havoc (Japan) wreaked on other nations."

The Japan-led resolution also condemns "in the strongest terms" the nuclear tests conducted by North Korea and its launches using ballistic missile technology, expressing "serious concern" about the country's ongoing nuclear activities.

India not a signatory of NPT



Activists of the Communist Party of India (CPI) and All India Students' Association (AISA) hold banners during a sit-in protest against the nuclear power talks between Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Japanese counterpart, Shinzo Abe, in New Delhi, India, on Dec. 12. (AP Photo)

December 13, 2015

Japan's nuclear power deal in principle with India a first with an NPT non-signer

http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/politics/AJ201512130019

THE ASAHI SHIMBUN

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's agreement in principle to supply nuclear power technology to India may run counter to Japan's stated commitment against the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

The deal was reached on Dec. 12 during a meeting between Abe, who is visiting New Delhi, and his Indian counterpart, Narendra Modi.

If an actual nuclear power agreement is signed, it would mark the first for Japan with a nation that has not signed the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty.

The latest move by Japan was met swiftly with criticism in Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Hiroshima Mayor Kazumi Matsui issued a statement on Dec. 12 asking that no nuclear power agreement with India be signed until it joined the NPT. The agreement reached between Abe and Modi "cannot be said to be in line with the position of maintaining the NPT structure by preventing its hollowing out," Matsui said.

Japan and India began negotiating a nuclear power agreement in 2010 when the Democratic Party of Japan was still in power. Japan had wanted a provision in any such deal that would allow it to immediately stop any nuclear power cooperation should India resume testing of nuclear weapons, which has been on hold since 1998.

Japan insisted on that position because of its goal of abolishing nuclear weapons, being the only nation in the world to have been subjected to the destructive power of such devices.

Although a joint declaration and a memorandum regarding a nuclear power agreement were released on Dec. 12, no provisions were included regarding a suspension of cooperation should India resume nuclear testing.

In the joint declaration, the two leaders confirmed that a nuclear power agreement would be signed after completion of the technological details through further negotiations between the two nations.

According to Japanese officials who briefed reporters, in his meeting with Modi, Abe said Japan would suspend cooperation if India resumed nuclear testing. Those officials said that reference would serve as a brake against India if it considered resumption of nuclear testing.

The move toward providing nuclear power technology with a nation that has not signed the NPT would be a major shift for Japan, which had emphasized nuclear nonproliferation until now.

At the same time, the Abe administration has placed the export of major infrastructure projects as a key pillar of its economic growth strategy, so it is eager to export nuclear power plant technology.

Before Abe's meeting with Modi, a high-ranking Foreign Ministry official said, "With the experiences of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan is the only nation that has been hit by nuclear bombs and that is why Japan has pushed a nuclear nonproliferation diplomacy. We will not enter into an agreement that is not in line with that stance."

India has long insisted that it has the right to develop nuclear weapons. While it has announced a moratorium on nuclear testing, it apparently did not want to commit in writing any suspension of nuclear power cooperation should it ever resume nuclear testing.

This would not be the first time India has pushed for an agreement on nuclear power technology cooperation that did not contain a provision against nuclear testing.

India reached a similar deal with the United States in 2008. The United States has a domestic law that includes a provision that allows for suspension of nuclear power cooperation should nuclear testing be conducted.

The news of the latest agreement on Dec. 12 was criticized by Miyako Jodai, 76, who survived the atomic bombing of Nagasaki on Aug. 9, 1945. She linked the latest agreement with the 2011 accident at the Fukushima No. 1 nuclear power plant.

"The people of Fukushima are still suffering and spent nuclear fuel cannot be disposed of properly," Jodai said. "It is wrong to sell nuclear plant technology overseas by emphasizing only its safety and convenience."

(Kazuki Uechi and Yoshihiro Kando in New Delhi and Hajimu Takeda and Kaname Ohira in Tokyo contributed to this article.)

"A slap in the face of NPT"

December 14, 2015

EDITORIAL: Japan-India nuclear cooperation a slap in the face of NPT

<http://ajw.asahi.com/article/views/editorial/AJ201512140016>

The framework for preventing the spread of technology and materials for building nuclear weapons is becoming increasingly compromised.

Even Japan, which has suffered atomic bombings, has joined the ranks of the world's nations that are eager to pitch nuclear technology even to a country with nuclear weapons for the sake of commercial interests.

During a visit to India on Dec. 12, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe agreed with his Indian counterpart, Narendra Modi, that the two countries will sign a deal on civil nuclear cooperation. The agreement would bolster the export of nuclear technology by Japanese enterprises.

India became in possession of nuclear weapons without joining the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT). Its relations with neighboring Pakistan, which also refused to join the NPT and armed itself with nuclear weapons, remain strained.

Providing nuclear technology to such a nation should be called an act of folly that makes light of the longstanding and persevering nuclear nonproliferation efforts of the global community and would further emasculate the nonproliferation regime.

Rising calls for the abolition of nuclear weapons in the years following World War II, when the world came under a threat of the potential use of nuclear weapons, were the driving force behind the NPT, which entered into force in 1970.

Nations of the world, including Japan, joined the treaty under its guiding principle, which obligates the United States, Britain, France, China and Russia to commit to nuclear disarmament in exchange for granting them the status of nuclear-weapon states. The NPT also allows the other countries to use nuclear power only for peaceful purposes.

Supplier nations made it a rule not to trade in nuclear technology with countries outside that framework. But the United States took the initiative in granting an exception to India in 2008. Since then, the United States, France, Russia, South Korea and other nations have all signed nuclear agreements with India.

Those countries are looking at India as a promising market for pitching nuclear power plant technology. That is because India already hosts about 20 nuclear reactors and plans to build 40 more at a time when it is becoming increasingly difficult to build reactors in advanced nations.

The United States and other countries should realize that compromising the nuclear nonproliferation principles for the benefit of business opportunities would engender serious problems for the future. Japan, among others, is a nation that should be taking the lead in creating a nuclear-free world. It not only knows about the tragic consequences of the use of nuclear weapons but also has experienced one of the world's largest nuclear plant disasters and continues to be plagued by the resulting radioactive contamination.

Japan is the country that should be applying the brakes on any moves toward nuclear proliferation. The previous administration led by the Democratic Party of Japan, however, opened negotiations on the nuclear deal with India five years ago. Both the DPJ government and Abe's current administration cannot escape the charge of having forgotten the duty and responsibility of a nation that has suffered atomic bombings.

Abe told a news conference Dec. 12 that he would go along with India in pursuing a world free of nuclear weapons. But he has yet to provide a specific action to achieve that goal.

We are only left to wonder how we could explain to North Korea and Iran, which are insisting on their own nuclear development programs, why we are dealing differently with India. We could lose our convincing power for dissuading other nations from following in their footsteps.

The threat of nuclear arms will only increase as long as Japan, the United States and other countries, which should be guardians of the nonproliferation regime, are using their own hands to undermine its foundation.

--The Asahi Shimbun, Dec. 13

Hibaku rice to remember the horrors of atomic bombing

December 14, 2015

'Hibaku' rice grown to recall horror of atomic bombing

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2015/12/14/national/hibaku-rice-grown-to-recall-horror-of-atomic-bombing/#.Vm6W078R-ot>

by Takeshi Tsuchiya

Kyodo

Hibaku rice tasseled again this year in various parts of Japan as a "living witness" to the horror of the atomic bombing of Nagasaki 70 years ago.

The rice is derived from seeds collected in October 1945 by Kyushu University researchers in areas close to the hypocenter of the atomic bomb dropped on Nagasaki just before the end of World War II in August of that year.

Hibaku (exposure to radiation) rice looks healthy, though greener than normal. But its husks are "almost empty," Kikuo Sakai, 81, said in early October, pointing to the rice grown in a 100-sq.-meter plot in his rice paddy in Motomiya, Fukushima Prefecture.

"The taste isn't good," added his wife, Ko, 76.

Sakai learned about the hibaku rice seeds from a farming magazine and began growing it, not for sale but to remember relatives who went to war and never returned, and the acute food shortages experienced in Japan during and after WWII.

"I will continue growing the rice as long as I live," Sakai said.

The husks of many plants produced from such seeds are empty because of chromosome damage caused by radiation.

Planting the rice around Japan as an act of remembrance began following a 1995 documentary aired by NHK.

The documentary was produced by then NHK director Taketoshi Koga, 74, a graduate from Kyushu University's agricultural department who had been given some of the rice seeds.

Seeds from the cultivated hibaku rice in Nagasaki were distributed to citizens and planted in at least 24 prefectures, including Hiroshima, which was hit by an atomic bomb days before Nagasaki.

The average age of A-bomb survivors in Hiroshima and Nagasaki now tops 80. "While it should be tough both physically and mentally for the survivors to talk about their experiences, hibaku rice shows the horror of atomic bombing by just being there," Koga said.

Toshiro Taki, a 78-year-old former junior high school teacher in Unnan, Shimane Prefecture, also grows hibaku rice.

Taki's father was an elementary school teacher who taught physician Takashi Nagai, known as the "saint of Urakami." He devoted himself to the treatment of hibakusha in Nagasaki despite his own grievous injuries from exposure to radiation near Urakami Cathedral in the vicinity of the bombing hypocenter. "Hibaku rice has been growing better and better," Taki said, noting the rice becomes healthier over generations when left in the natural environment.

But growers have opted to plant fruitless seeds in order to remember the pains of the atomic bombing.

Choichi Ueno, 64, who has been growing hibaku rice in the town of Kaminokawa, Tochigi Prefecture, for a decade, said, "I hope the rice will motivate people to look back on the past," especially the horror of the atomic bombings.

CORE seeks Japanese support

December 17, 2015

Opponents of U.S. nuclear bomb 'glorification' park seek Japanese support

http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/social_affairs/AJ201512170049

By MASATO TAINAKA/ Staff Writer

Residents who fell sick living near the facility that produced plutonium for the Nagasaki atomic bomb are seeking Japanese support for a campaign against an attraction in the United States that they say "glorifies" nuclear weapons.

The move by the group called Consequences of Radiation Exposure (CORE) follows the U.S. government's establishment on Nov. 10 of the Manhattan Project National Historical Park at three sites related to the development of the first atomic bombs used by the United States.

One of those sites is in Hanford, Washington state, which in 1945 produced the plutonium for the world's first nuclear test in Alamogordo, New Mexico, as well as in the bomb detonated over Nagasaki on Aug. 9, 1945.

"The intended purpose of this new park was to glorify the science behind the atomic bomb," said Trisha Pritikin, 65, a founding member of CORE and a lawyer whose father worked as an engineer at the Hanford facility. "We are fighting an uphill battle."

One of CORE's objectives is to collect donations to build a new museum in Seattle to focus on the negative consequences of the nuclear weapons development program and nuclear energy.

Tom Bailie, 68, a farmer near Hanford and CORE member, said: "Humans cannot co-exist with nuclear weapons or nuclear power plants. I want to build a museum with the people of Japan who are well aware of that."

CORE is comprised of people living near the Hanford site, like Bailie, who fell sick over the years, likely due to the radiation emitted from the facility.

Bailie has suffered from various health problems since childhood. At 18, he was diagnosed as being infertile. Family members have also died of cancer.

He has previously spoken to the media about what he calls "the death mile" near his home where there has been a high incidence of miscarriage, deformed babies, cancer and leukemia.

Bailie also appeared in the 2003 Japanese movie "Hibakusha--At the End of the World" about the survivors of the 1945 atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki as well as Iraqi victims of depleted uranium shells, directed by Hitomi Kamanaka.

After World War II, the Hanford facility produced enough weapons-grade plutonium for about 7,000 bombs the same size as the one dropped on Nagasaki.

In 1986, the U.S. Energy Department released 19,000 pages of confidential documents in response to a freedom-of-information request made by local residents.

According to the documents, an experiment called "Green-run" at the Hanford site in December 1949 intentionally emitted 740 terabecquerels of radioactive xenon-133 and 287 terabecquerels of iodine-131. One tera is 1 trillion bequerels.

The area around the Hanford site was also contaminated with various radioactive elements during the Cold War. Work to decontaminate the site continued from 1989 after the facility shut down, but 177 underground tanks store large volumes of highly radioactive waste liquids that have not been processed at all.

Those residents living near the facility call themselves "downwinders" because they developed cancer and thyroid problems likely caused by wind-borne radioactive elements from the Hanford site.

Pritikin's parents both died of thyroid cancer and she herself suffers from headaches and gastrointestinal and thyroid problems. She said radiation from the Hanford site "killed him (my father), my mom, and, maybe, eventually me."

Since 1990, about 5,000 individuals, including many downwinders, have filed lawsuits against the companies contracted with the Department of Energy. Pritikin was one of those litigants, but courts never acknowledged a causal relationship between radiation and health problems. Many of the plaintiffs died before a verdict was even handed down.

The B reactor at Hanford that produced the plutonium used in the Nagasaki bomb has already been opened as a museum to the public. It will likely become the main attraction for the national historical park that officials want to be complete in around 2020, with the other Manhattan Project sites in Los Alamos, New Mexico, and Oak Ridge, Tennessee.

The display at the Hanford B reactor now highlights the scientific achievements that gave birth to the nuclear age.

However, Norma Field, professor emeritus of East Asian studies at the University of Chicago who is also a CORE director, said other sides of the story should also be told.

"The history of the Manhattan Project cannot be passed off as a history of triumph. It is a history of widespread, continued suffering on the part of U.S. citizens," Field said.

"Hibakusha seeing themselves as part of a global history of exploitation and suffering through the CORE project would be an immense contribution."

Japan shouldn't make a mockery of NPT

December 16, 2015

Editorial: Japan-India atomic cooperation agreement lacks guarantee for peaceful use

<http://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20151216/p2a/00m/0na/007000c>

It is important for Japan to strengthen its economic and security relations with India, which has the world's second largest population at over 1.2 billion and is enjoying economic growth.

However, **Japan, being the only atomic-bombed country, must not play any role in helping making the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) a mere facade.**

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and his Indian counterpart Narendra Modi agreed in principle that the two countries will sign an atomic energy agreement opening the way for India to import nuclear plant-related equipment from Japan.

The NPT allows only five nuclear powers -- the United States, Russia, Britain, France and China -- to possess such weapons of mass destruction while permitting other countries to use atomic energy purely for peaceful purposes. India criticizes the NPT as an unequal treaty and refuses to join it.

This is the first time for Japan to sign an atomic energy agreement with a non-party to the NPT. Even though India is supposed to use nuclear-related equipment it will import from Japan strictly for peaceful purposes, Japan's cooperation with India, which continues to possess nuclear weapons outside the framework of the NPT, could go beyond the limit set by the treaty.

The latest agreement does not clarify how to secure the peaceful use of Japan's atomic energy technology in India.

Prime Minister Abe appreciated a moratorium on nuclear tests that India announced in 2008, and emphasized that the agreement will ensure Japan's cooperation with India be limited to peaceful purposes.

However, his assertion is without sufficient basis. Abe reportedly told Modi during the latest summit meeting that Japan would immediately suspend its cooperation if New Delhi were to conduct another nuclear test. However, it remains to be seen whether that point will be clearly mentioned in the bilateral agreement.

The two countries have also delayed a conclusion on how to reprocess spent nuclear fuel at atomic power stations that will be built using devices and materials imported from Japan.

The two countries appear to have hastily reached a broad agreement on atomic energy cooperation without working out its details.

In India, 21 nuclear reactors are in operation, and the country has set a goal of expanding the power generation capacity of its atomic power stations to nearly 11 times the current level by 2032.

The United States signed an atomic energy agreement with India in 2008 in a bid to enter this potentially huge nuclear market. Since then, France, Russia, Canada, South Korea and other countries have signed similar pacts with India.

Japan launched negotiations with India on such an agreement in 2010 under the previous administration led by the now largest opposition Democratic Party of Japan as the government regarded exports of nuclear plants as part of its economic growth strategy. Japan was under pressure from the United States and France to sign an atomic power agreement with India because these countries would be affected by Japan's failure to conclude such an accord as atomic energy companies in these three countries are cooperating increasingly closely. The Abe government also apparently aims to keep China in check by strengthening Japan-India nuclear cooperation.

The government has struggled to achieve a balance between its position as the only atomic-bombed country and its realistic benefits of helping Japanese companies enter the Indian nuclear energy market and keeping China in check. If guaranteeing that Japan-made nuclear-related equipment will be used purely for peaceful purposes in India is a key to achieving this balance, Japan should clarify this when the two countries sign the agreement.

Japan, which is supposed to play a leading role in nuclear disarmament, must not give tacit approval to India's possession of nuclear arms or facilitate nuclear proliferation. If Japan were to do so, the international community would lose confidence in Tokyo's diplomacy aimed at ridding the world of nuclear weapons and Japan's influence in this regard would be lost.

Japan "checks" N. Korea's nuclear test

January 6, 2015

Japan deploys planes to collect radioactive material after North Korean nuclear test

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2016/01/06/national/japan-deploys-planes-to-collect-radioactive-material-after-north-korean-nuclear-test/>

AFP-JIJI

The Defense Ministry on Wednesday deployed three planes to collect possible radioactive material following North Korea's claimed hydrogen bomb test, officials said.

"To understand the impact of possible radioactive materials released by the test, Air Self-Defense Force planes have collected dust in the air," Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga told a news conference.

"It is currently being sent to the Japan Chemical Analysis Center," he said, adding that the T4 training planes stayed in Japanese airspace.

Wednesday's nuclear test was the North's fourth after previous ones in 2006, 2009 and 2013, though many experts cast doubt on Pyongyang's claim that it was a successful test of a hydrogen bomb.

They said the seismic activity suggested a less powerful atomic device.

In Vienna, the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) said the magnitude was very similar to that of 2013.

But this did not rule out an H-bomb, since the nature of the device could not be determined from seismic data alone.

The CTBTO said further clues might come from analysis of radionuclides (radioactive particles). But this could take anything from several days to several months, and they might not be detected at all.

Randy Bell, director of CTBTO's international data division, said the data Wednesday was very consistent with the 2013 test and the seismic magnitude of 4.9 was the same.

"But to try to ascertain the very particular nature, such as whether this was nuclear or non-nuclear, or which type of nuclear, is not appropriate at this time," he told reporters.

In Tokyo, Suga said no abnormal levels of radiation had been detected through monitoring posts across Japan as of early Wednesday evening.

The results collected by the planes are expected to be released on Thursday, an official with Japan's Nuclear Regulation Authority told reporters.

Last month, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un suggested Pyongyang had already developed a hydrogen bomb, though the claim was questioned by international experts.

Who has what?

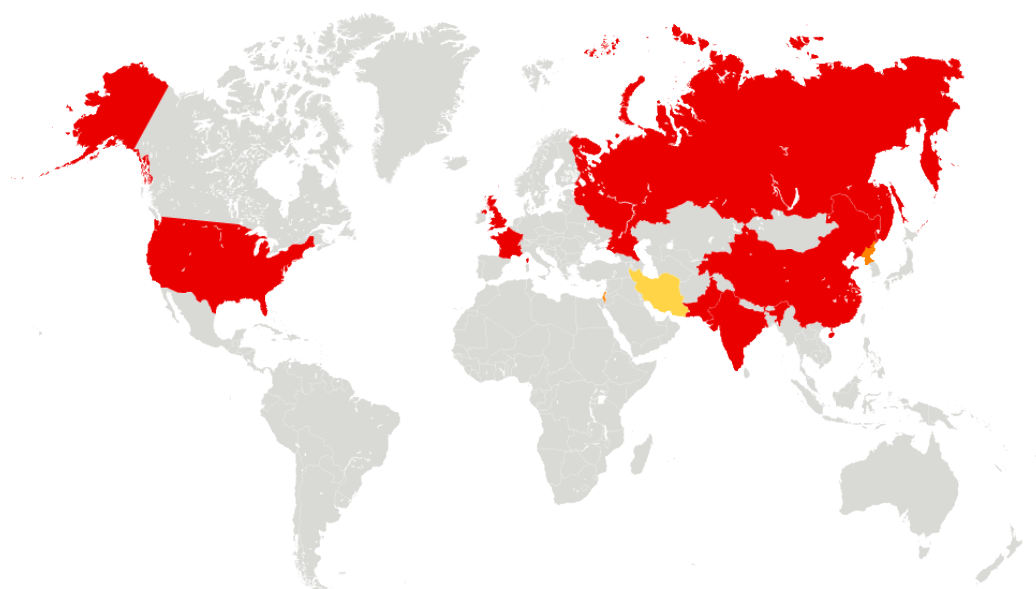
<http://edition.cnn.com/interactive/2013/03/world/nuclear-weapon-states/>

Nuclear weapons: Who has what?

Updated January 6, 2015

More than two dozen countries have nuclear power, but only a few have nuclear weapons or are suspected of pursuing nuclear weapons. Click on a country below to learn more about their nuclear programs.

- Overview
- Country-by-country details
- Known to have nuclear weapons
- Suspected to have nuclear weapons
- Accused of pursuing weapons, now in deal never to do so



First test	Most recent test	Total tests	Estimated warheads	United States
1945	1992	1,054	7,200	Russia
1949	1990	715	7,500	United Kingdom
1952	1991	45	215	France
1960	1996	210	300	China
1964	1996	45	260	India
1974	1998	6	110-120	Pakistan
1998	1998	6	120-130	North Korea
2006	2016 (claimed)	3	Fewer than 10	Israel
No confirmed test	No confirmed test	No confirmed test	80	Iran
No confirmed test	No confirmed test	No confirmed test	0	Country

Sources: Federation of American Scientists, CIA World Factbook, Nuclear Threat Initiative, U.S. Census Bureau

Do not use the "deterrence" argument

January 11, 2016

<http://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20160111/p2a/00m/0na/010000c>

Nuclear Watch: Concerns over a potential deterrence (Pt. 62)

January 11, 2016 (Mainichi Japan)

Nobuyasu Abe, a member of the Japan Atomic Energy Commission (AEC), bitterly criticized former Defense Minister Satoshi Morimoto, when they met face-to-face at an AEC meeting on Nov. 5, 2015, for insisting that Japan should continue its nuclear fuel cycle project to maintain Japan's deterrence.

"I respect you, but I'd like to say I have a different opinion from yours on this point," said Abe, 70, who had also served as U.N. deputy secretary general in charge of arms reductions.

"We have no plan to use the reprocessing plant in the Aomori Prefecture village of Rokkasho for military purposes. We've never even thought about using it for such purposes. There are those who say the Rokkasho plant is necessary for Japan's deterrence, but I don't want them to say that. Once you mention that, other countries would say, 'Just as we expected,'" Abe angrily told Morimoto, 74.

Shortly before that, Morimoto said, "China, Russia, North Korea, Taiwan and South Korea also have nuclear plants for peaceful purposes. If Japan were to abandon atomic power while other countries don't do the same, Japan would abandon its deterrence as well. It'd not be a desirable choice."

Morimoto meant that Japan's continuance of the nuclear fuel cycle project, despite having no intention of going nuclear, would boost Japan's security, because the issue of deterrence is how other countries view Japan's intentions.

Opinions that Japan should arm itself with nuclear weapons rapidly disappeared after the country ratified the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) in 1976. However, such calls resurface whenever North Korea conducts a nuclear test and when calls are mounting within Japan for a review of its atomic energy policy.

Shigeru Ishiba, 58, state minister in charge of overcoming population decline and vitalizing local economies, said, "Japan should not stop nuclear plants to maintain Japan's potential nuclear deterrence."

Former defense minister Ishiba expressed this view about half a year after the March 2011 outbreak of the Fukushima nuclear crisis. At the time, the Japanese public was growing skeptical of atomic power.

There is criticism that about 20 billion yen is needed to maintain the prototype fast-breeder reactor Monju in Fukui Prefecture, which produces higher-quality plutonium than that used for nuclear weapons. However, those in favor of maintaining nuclear plants to keep Japan's deterrence are beginning to say, "It's cheap if we think it's part of Japan's defense spending."

Tetsuya Endo, 80, who had served as acting chairman of the AEC, recalls that he was repeatedly grilled by U.S. negotiators over why Japan stuck to plutonium and whether Japan was considering converting plutonium for military purposes when he was serving as Japan's chief negotiator in talks on the bilateral nuclear energy agreement in the late 1980s.

Other countries are casting a more suspicious eye on Japan's atomic energy program than Japanese people imagine. Endo warns that Japanese officials should confine their remarks to avoid causing such suspicions.

"I say it's just like 'Tora-san' movies," says Endo. When he heard Ishiba and Morimoto's remarks, he remembered a line from the Japanese film series, "Otoko wa Tsuraiyo" ("It's tough being a man") starring

Kiyoshi Atsumi. In the film, protagonist Tora-san, played by Atsumi, repeatedly says, "That's something that's best left unsaid." (By Haruyuki Aikawa, Senior Writer)

Former fishermen seek compensation

More former fishermen to seek worker's compensation over 1954 Bikini Atoll nuke test

<http://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20160112/p2a/00m/0na/007000c>

January 12, 2016 (Mainichi Japan)

More former fishermen **who developed cancer after sailing near a 1954 United States hydrogen bomb test site at the Bikini Atoll in the Pacific Ocean** are planning to seek worker's compensation, it has been learned.

The nuclear tests, of which there were six, took place from March 1 through May 14 in 1954 primarily at the atoll, located in the Marshall Islands. After the first test, the 23-crew Daigo Fukuryu Maru, located about 160 kilometers east and outside of the designated danger zone, was exposed to radioactive fallout. The ship's head radio operator, 40-year-old Aikichi Kuboyama, died half a year later. Other ships were also affected across a large area, and were forced to throw away their fish catches.

Until now only crew members aboard the Daigo Fukuryu Maru tuna boat have been compensated, and should the seamen's insurance payments be granted to others, it will raise hopes for yet further aid. A citizens' group, "Taiheiyo Kakuhsai Shien Center" (Pacific Ocean nuclear disaster support center), is supporting the former fishermen newly seeking compensation. According to the center, around 10 people in Kochi Prefecture, including bereaved family members of former fishermen who died after developing cancer, are expected to apply to the Japan Health Insurance Association's seamen's insurance department in February or March this year **for recognition of their radiation exposure as an on-the-job injury. They will argue for a causal relationship between their exposure and their illnesses**, and seek monetary compensation.

From Jan. 10, staff from the center, three Kochi Prefecture organizations and doctor Hajime Kikima, 71, who was involved with the application of former crew members of the Daigo Fukuryu Maru for insurance compensation, visited the former fishermen who are considering the new applications and confirmed their intentions about whether or not to seek compensation. On Jan. 11, members of the three Kochi Prefecture organizations met together with lawyers in the city of Kochi, where they created a support team for the former fishermen.

In 1955, the U.S. gave Japan 2 million dollars (worth about 720 million yen at the time) in "consolation money" and ended the issue at a political level. The crew members of the Daigo Fukuryu Maru were each given 2 million yen, but for people aboard the other nearby ships, there has not been a true investigation of their circumstances.

In September 2014, the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare, in response to a demand from the center, did release, for the first time, documents on a survey of the radioactive exposure of ships apart from that of the Daigo Fukuryu Maru. However, it held that the ship crews, other than that of the Daigo Fukuryu Maru, were only exposed to tiny amounts of radiation, which it said fell short of the amount that international standards deem would affect a person's health.

However, after professor Shin Toyoda of the Okayama University of Science, who specializes in measuring radiation, and others examined the tooth enamel of former seamen who were around 1,300 kilometers east of the nuclear test site, they reported finding up to 414 millisieverts in the enamel. This is about equal to the exposure of people some 1.6 kilometers from the hypocenter of the Hiroshima atomic bomb.

Under the Atomic Bomb Survivors' Assistance Act, people who were within 3.5 kilometers of a nuclear bomb hypocenter and who develop certain ailments such as cancer are recognized as eligible to receive medical allowances. While no such system exists for the former crew members who were near the Bikini Atoll test site, the crew members of the Daigo Fukuryu Maru received compensation through the application of seamen's insurance. Part of the plan for the former crew members newly seeking compensation is to use the results of the survey by professor Toyoda's group when applying for the compensation.

Yutaka Kuwano, 83, who was aboard the Daini Kosei Maru tuna boat when the test occurred and developed stomach cancer, says, "The Japanese government has held that it is unrelated to the issue. I didn't know there was a way for us to receive compensation, and I had mostly given up. I want to work together (with the effort to acquire aid) **also in order to keep the (Bikini Atoll nuclear exposure) incident from disappearing from the public's memory.**"

Next generation to keep up fight for abolition of nuclear arms

January 11, 2016

Japanese student activist to keep up lifelong fight against nuclear arms

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2016/01/11/national/japanese-student-activist-keep-lifelong-fight-nuclear-arms/#.VpSwvFIR-ov>

by Miya Tanaka
Kyodo

YOKOHAMA – For aging atomic bomb survivors, it is a matter of grave concern whether their long-running campaign to see the abolition of nuclear weapons will be continued by the next generation, and just as important to them as passing on their memories of the 1945 bombings.

They may have a ray of hope in a 23-year-old descendant of an atomic bomb survivor who is working for a better future through a range of activities, most recently as a member of the student group that spearheaded last year's protests against the security laws.

Mitsuhiro Hayashida is one of the founding members of SEALDs (Students Emergency Action for Liberal Democracy-s), which was launched in May, and has also been deeply committed since his teenage days to the effort to ban nuclear weapons.

"What drives me in my current actions are the words of the hibakusha I have heard all my life," the senior student at Meiji Gakuin University in Tokyo told the audience at an event in October to oppose the security laws and nuclear arms.

Born in Nagasaki, Hayashida has been immersed in local peace education since his childhood and grew up listening to the accounts of people who survived the city's bombing, including his grandfather, who entered the city shortly after the blast and handled dead bodies.

Hayashida was devoted during his high school years to campaigning in and outside Japan against nuclear weapons. He was selected as a High School Student Peace Ambassador in 2009 out of some 110 applicants to promote nuclear abolition around the world.

Hayashida recalled in a recent interview that it was not only a sense of responsibility that motivated him in his activities.

"I was actually enjoying them because I could learn a lot of things by talking with various people and traveling overseas. It gave me a chance to escape from the school's closed atmosphere," he said.

His life took another turn following the 2011 Fukushima nuclear crisis, which began the day after he moved to Yokohama to enroll in university.

Realizing that civilian use of nuclear power can expose people to radiation just like atomic bombs, Hayashida was drawn to protests in front of the prime minister's office in 2012. These demonstrations also drew the other youths who would go on to form SEALDs, such as the group's leading figure, Aki Okuda, who was also attending Meiji Gakuin University.

While Hayashida's current focus is on repealing the security laws that passed the Diet in September, expanding the role of the Self-Defense Forces overseas, he believes the activities of SEALDs are also connected to his mission to abolish nuclear weapons.

"I think debating national security issues will eventually lead to (the question of whether we need) atomic bombs, so in my mind these two issues are linked," he said.

As the debate over the security laws heightened awareness among the public about issues of war and peace, it might have been a good chance for the campaign against nuclear weapons to gain steam.

Hayashida said that didn't happen because of deep-seated divisions between the organizations leading the effort for abolishing nuclear arms.

"I have grown up under the influence of existing peace groups and I respect what they have done over the past decades, but I'm also fed up with their ideological conflicts," he said.

Movements in Japan to ban nuclear weapons emerged in the 1950s, but a key group launched in 1955 split over differences on whether to back the Soviet Union's nuclear testing, resulting in the birth of another group. Since then, the two major anti-nuclear organizations have rarely acted together.

Hayashida has explored his own ways to stir up interest among his fellow university students and other youths by organizing tours to Nagasaki and the other atomic-bombed city, Hiroshima, every summer since 2011. He also frequently speaks at events at the request of peace groups.

Hayashida, who plans to continue his study of atomic bomb survivors in graduate school, is eager to continue advocating the abolition of nuclear weapons in the future, said he also wants to "create" a new movement with the power to appeal to young people.

He may not have to shoulder the burden of peace campaigning alone, as many youths in Japan now appear to be breaking out of their general image of political apathy.

"What SEALDs has done is it really lowered the threshold (for campaigning against political issues). And I don't think this change is temporary," Hayashida said.

The group's hip style of protest — featuring rap slogans and flashy pamphlets to get its message across — succeeded in attracting young people to demonstrations, which had been characterized by graying people mobilized by labor unions or groups linked to left-wing parties.

SEALDs is expected to disband following the Upper House election this summer, when it will campaign to oust the ruling bloc from power, but Hayashida said he gets excited when he thinks how being a part of SEALDs may affect young people after they finish being students and “go out into the world.”

Positive effects already seem to be emerging.

Mayuu Takahashi, 19, said she has established a “peace action” group at Rikkyo University to join movements to oppose the security laws.

“I didn’t talk about political issues to people around me before, but I have been encouraged to be vocal by seeing SEALDs and scholars and other people,” Takahashi said as she took part in an anti-war march Dec. 6. “I want to continue engaging in these kinds of movements even after SEALDs disbands.”

CTBT: It's now time to act

January 13, 2016

Nuclear test ban talks may be held in April amid heightened tensions over Pyongyang's provocation

Kyodo

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2016/01/13/national/politics-diplomacy/nuclear-test-ban-talks-may-held-april-amid-heightened-tensions-pyongyang-provocation/#.VpX9i1IR-ot>

January 13, 2016

Vienna - The Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty Organization plans to **convene a ministerial-level meeting as soon as April amid heightened concern over nuclear weapons proliferation following North Korea's nuclear test last week**, commission Chairman Cristian Istrate said. At the meeting to commemorate 20 years since the opening of the treaty to signing, participants are expected to call for it to be brought into force, and to discuss the commission's efforts to monitor nuclear tests across the globe.

In a recent interview with Kyodo News, the Romanian ambassador said he hopes Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida, a Diet member representing the city of Hiroshima, which was devastated by a U.S. atomic bomb in 1945, will attend the meeting.

“It’s now time to act” and send out a “powerful signal” to the public and to political leaders, Istrate said. “Japan has a particular profile with regard to the prohibition of nuclear tests and nuclear disarmament,” and has a “very strong” and “legitimate voice,” he said.

Istrate also raised the possibility of inviting the mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and an atomic bomb survivor to the meeting in Vienna, where the commission is headquartered. Nagasaki is the other Japanese city hit by a U.S. atomic bomb in 1945.

The commission chairman said he also wants the foreign ministers of countries possessing nuclear weapons such as the United States, Russia and China, as well as U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, to attend.

The treaty bans all types of nuclear explosions and has a verification mechanism. It was opened for signing in 1996 but has yet to enter into force because the United States, China, Egypt, Iran, Israel, North Korea, India and Pakistan have yet to ratify it.

Meanwhile the commission has developed a system to monitor nuclear testing worldwide, with nearly 90 percent of a planned 337 facilities now in place. It detected North Korea's nuclear test on Jan. 6.

At the meeting, Istrate said he will explain that the CTBT treaty has "long-term benefits" for global security. "We have to use this opportunity to raise public awareness" to put the treaty into force, he added.

The envisioned meeting is separate from a foreign ministerial-level conference held every two years to facilitate the CTBT's entry into force. Japan and Kazakhstan co-chaired that conference last September.

Scary "gaps" in global nuke security system

January 15, 2015

World must do more to curb nuclear terror threat: watchdog

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2016/01/15/world/world-must-curb-nuclear-terror-threat-watchdog/#.VpivrlIR-ot>

AFP-JIJI

WASHINGTON – International progress in reducing the threat of nuclear terrorism has slowed in recent years, and the global nuclear security system remains vulnerable, according to a report released Thursday.

The Nuclear Threat Initiative, a leading U.S. nonproliferation watchdog, found that even as international security has been rocked by one crisis after another, basic weaknesses persist in securing the world's fissile materials.

"The current global nuclear security system has dangerous gaps that prevent it from being truly comprehensive and effective," NTI President Joan Rohlfing said in a statement.

"Until those gaps are closed, terrorists will seek to exploit them."

World leaders are due to meet from March 31 to April 1 in Washington for the fourth and final Nuclear Security Summit under the administration of President Barack Obama.

"Leaders must commit to a path forward when they meet this spring," Rohlfing said.

"The consequences of inaction in the face of new and evolving threats are simply too great."

Since 2014, there have been no improvements in several areas related to securing highly enriched uranium and plutonium, the NTI said.

"The number of countries taking the most important step to prevent theft — eliminating their materials — also has dropped," NTI noted.

In the two years ahead of releasing its prior report in 2014, seven countries eliminated their weapons-usable nuclear materials.

But in the run-up to the 2016 edition of its Nuclear Threat Index, only one country — Uzbekistan — has been scratched from the list of countries with weapons-usable nuclear materials.

The NTI Index also finds worrying shortfalls in how well countries protect their nuclear facilities against potential sabotage, as well as from cyber attacks.

The report warns **many countries considering nuclear power are struggling to implement even basic measures to prevent sabotage** that could lead to a radiological spill similar in size to Japan's 2011 Fukushima disaster.

Twenty countries "do not even have basic requirements to protect nuclear facilities from cyber attacks," the findings state.

Among several suggested improvements, the NTI recommends the creation of international norms around nuclear security, as well as improved cybersecurity measures.

Worrying: 2016 Nuclear Security Index

January 20, 2016

2016's Nuclear Security Index

Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) play the roles of research, advocacy and norm promotion, agenda setting, lobbying public authorities, implementing programs and delivering services and humanitarian assistance, monitoring implementation of international commitments, and direct action. Without their decadeslong efforts on human and labor rights, environmental and consumer protection and other social, economic and political activism, the world would be a far harsher place for all of us today.

NGOs have also long been active on nuclear issues, in relation both to nuclear power and weapons. While several Nobel Peace Prizes have been controversial, one that received general acclaim was to the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War in 1985. One of the key messages from IPPNW was the shared interests of U.S. and Soviet scientists in averting a nuclear war. They were preceded by the Pugwash Conference founded in 1957 and have been joined by other NGOs like Global Zero and Reaching Critical Will, also animated by grave concerns about the acute risks posed by nuclear weapons.

With the collapse of the Soviet Union the world faced the threat of so-called "loose nukes": nuclear weapons and materials that were stored in anything but secure locations and conditions across the vast country, as well as a large number of unemployed and badly paid but highly skilled nuclear scientists. Once again visionary Americans worked with Russian colleagues to try to gradually reduce, contain and eliminate the risks. But after the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, the world awoke to the new danger of nuclear terrorism. **The very notion of deterrence was utterly irrelevant to groups who prided themselves in suicide attacks and held no territory or fixed assets that could be threatened in retaliatory attacks.**

U.S. President Barack Obama took office with a vision for a world freed of the threat of nuclear weapons. Curiously, in his final State of the Union address on Jan. 13, with the exception of the Iran deal, he failed to mention nuclear issues. Yet while he may not have succeeded in the vision of a world free of nuclear weapons, he did initiate and will preside over the final nuclear security summit whereby all the world's leaders with relevant nuclear programs signed on to the agenda of securing all civilian nuclear materials and facilities. The first summit was held in Washington in April 2010 and the final one will be held there this year.

In this endeavor, too, NGOs have been active, with the most prominent being the Washington-based **Nuclear Threat Initiative**. (Disclosure: The Asia-Pacific Leadership Network, of which professor Chung-

in Moon from Yonsei University in Seoul and I are the co-convenors, is supported by NTI.) Founded in 2001 by philanthropist businessman Ted Turner and former U.S. Sen. Sam Nunn, NTI is actively engaged in shaping, developing and implementing nuclear security programs. In 2008, in partnership with others and collaboration with the IAEA, NTI helped to set up the **World Institute for Nuclear Security in Vienna**. With over 3,000 members from 115 countries, WINS brings together those responsible for looking after nuclear security to swap ideas, share best practices and exchange lessons learned. Last year NTI also helped set up the IAEA-administered, low-enriched uranium international nuclear fuel bank in Kazakhstan to facilitate the peaceful use of nuclear energy with minimal proliferation threats.

The flagship NTI publication is the biennial Nuclear Security Index, the third edition of which was published Jan. 14 in Washington (ntiindex.org). Prepared jointly by NTI and the Economist Intelligence Unit with the mission of **developing global standards and best practices for securing all nuclear materials**, the release of all three has been widely covered by the global media.

The 2016 index tells us a lot that is interesting. Australia maintains its overall top ranking among the world's 24 states with weapons-useable nuclear materials, but it is joined by six other states with a perfect score of 100. Of the 24, four became parties to key international agreements related to nuclear materials security during the biennium, six made new voluntary commitments (such as contributing to the IAEA Nuclear Security Fund), and eight passed or updated laws and regulations on cybersecurity. Readers of this newspaper will be pleased to learn that Japan is assessed as the most improved state, bettering its score by 27 from two years ago to join the group at the top with perfect scores. Among nuclear-armed states, France, the U.S. and the United Kingdom score the highest while the U.S., India, Russia and the U.K. are the most improved.

Rankings aside, on the upside, 12 countries decreased their quantities of weapons-usable nuclear materials over the four-year period measured by the index, and Uzbekistan removed all of its weapons-usable nuclear material. On the downside, no improvements have been made in the core protection and control measures assessed by the NTI Index.

More worrying, **the current global system for securing nuclear materials has major gaps that prevent it from being comprehensive and effective: No common set of international standards and best practices exists, there is no mechanism for holding states with lax security accountable, and the legal foundation for securing materials is neither complete nor universally observed.**

Most worrying, as my center reported in our own state of play on nuclear weapons last year, **83 percent of all fissile stocks are military materials and thus remain outside existing international security mechanisms**. Moreover, participation in international peer review — a very effective tool for improving performance and building confidence in others about the integrity of a state's security remains — limited: only 16 of the 24 states with weapons-usable nuclear materials have had a nuclear security peer review in the past five years, and seven have never had one.

An act of sabotage against a nuclear facility could result in a significant radiological release, similar in scale to the release when a tsunami hit the Fukushima nuclear power plant in 2011. The 2016 index for the first time assesses nuclear security conditions related to the protection of nuclear facilities against acts of sabotage for 45 countries with nuclear power plants or research reactors.

The index finds troubling shortfalls in how well countries are protecting nuclear facilities against sabotage and the emerging threat of cyberattacks. Twenty states lack even basic requirements to protect nuclear facilities from cyberattacks and score zero. Too many countries remain unprepared to deal with cyberattacks that might lead to sabotage.

Overly sensitive governments will attack the messenger with full "Yes Minister-style" efforts to belittle and discredit the index and NTI, casting aspersions on methodology, motives, bias, data reliability, etc. But

sensible states will make full use of the NTI Nuclear Security Index as a global benchmark against which to track and improve their own record.

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19.01.2016_No12 / News in Brief

Index Highlights 'Vulnerable Nations' For Nuclear Security **

<http://www.nucnet.org/all-the-news/2016/01/19/index-highlights-vulnerable-nations-for-nuclear-security>

Security & Safety

19 Jan (NucNet): **Of the 24 countries that had nuclear stockpiles of at least 1kg in 2015, Iran and North Korea are the worst in the world at securing these from theft**, according to an index from the Nuclear Threat Initiative and the Economist Intelligence Unit. Among the safest countries are Australia, Switzerland, Canada and Poland. Globally, progress is being made, but it is slowing, the index shows. A dozen countries have eliminated their stockpiles, but only Uzbekistan has done so since the 2014 index. Several countries have increased their stockpiles in that time, including India, Japan, the Netherlands, North Korea, Pakistan, and Britain. **Almost 2,000 tonnes of weapons-usable nuclear materials remain stored around the world.** There is also a growing risk of sabotage by a number of methods which includes cyberattacks, the index shows. Around 45 countries have some form of nuclear facilities, and would be vulnerable to a radiological leak on the same scale as the Fukushima-Daiichi accident. The most vulnerable nations are, again, Iran and North Korea. **Of the countries with nuclear facilities, developing countries with new nuclear programmes such Egypt and Algeria are least secure.**

Details online: <http://ntiindex.org>

Meeting in Tokyo to discuss North Korea's "nuclear issue"

January 20, 2016

17 states meet in Tokyo to prevent nuclear proliferation in wake of North Korean test

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2016/01/20/national/politics-diplomacy/17-states-meet-in-tokyo-to-prevent-nuclear-proliferation-in-wake-of-north-korean-test/#.VqDyKFKDmot>

Kyodo

Senior officials from Japan, the United States, Canada and 14 other Asia-Pacific nations discussed on Wednesday in Tokyo measures to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons in the wake of North Korea's recent nuclear test, Japan's Foreign Ministry said.

In the meeting, officials in charge of nonproliferation policy from the 17 countries focused on **ways to stop the entry of nuclear-related materials and technologies into North Korea through concerted international efforts**, it said.

“There remains a grave, outstanding challenge in the region — it is North Korea’s nuclear issue,” said Kazutoshi Aikawa, director general of the Disarmament, Non-Proliferation and Science Department at the Japanese Foreign Ministry, at the outset of the meeting, which was open to the media.

“North Korea’s issue is the issue that the international community, particularly countries in this region, needs to tackle and take united and immediate action on,” said Aikawa, who chaired the meeting. “So the international community must further its global and regional cooperation in a comprehensive manner.” The meeting, the 12th of its kind, included around 40 officials from China, Pyongyang’s longtime benefactor, the 10 countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, South Korea and countries interested in the security of the Asian region, namely Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States, the ministry said.

Japan hopes to develop human resources and provide expertise in the areas of cargo inspections and customs controls to Asian countries amid concerns materials related to nuclear weapons development are slipping through to Pyongyang, a government official said.

The talks, launched in November 2003, serve to complement the U.S.-led Proliferation Security Initiative aimed at stopping the trafficking of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery.

Doomsday clock at 3 minutes to midnight

January 27, 2016

‘Doomsday clock’ stands at three minutes to midnight: nuclear scientists

AP

STANFORD, CALIFORNIA – Rising tension between Russia and the U.S., North Korea’s recent nuclear test and a lack of aggressive steps to address climate change are putting the world under grave threat, scientists behind a “doomsday clock” that measures the likelihood of a global cataclysm said Tuesday. The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists announced that the minute hand on the metaphorical clock is at three minutes-to-midnight. The clock reflects how vulnerable the world is to catastrophe from nuclear weapons, climate change and new technologies, with midnight symbolizing apocalypse.

“Unless we change the way we think, humanity remains in serious danger,” said Lawrence Krauss, chair of the bulletin’s Board of Sponsors.

Krauss said the Iran nuclear agreement and Paris climate accord were good news. But the good news was offset by nuclear threats, including tension between nuclear-armed states India and Pakistan, and uncertainty that the Paris accord will lead to concrete action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The scientists behind the bulletin adjusted the clock from five minutes-to-midnight to three minutes-to-midnight last year. They cited climate change, modernization of nuclear weapons and outsized nuclear weapons arsenals as “extraordinary and undeniable threats to the continued existence of humanity.” The clock was previously at three minutes-to-midnight in 1984, when the bulletin said talks between the U.S. and Russia virtually stopped.

From a climate change perspective, if midnight on the clock represents the disappearance of humanity, three minutes-to-midnight is overly dire, said Michael Oppenheimer, a professor of geosciences and international affairs at Princeton University who is not affiliated with the bulletin.

On the other hand, Oppenheimer said if midnight means humans have emitted so much greenhouse gas that dangerous climate change is inevitable, then three minutes is a “fair analysis.”

“I think the jury is out as to whether the Paris agreement will make a significant difference,” he said. “The key is whether countries over the next couple of years are able to agree on some important details that were left out.”

Michael Shermer, publisher of Skeptic magazine examining social and scientific controversies, said in an email that the doomsday clock is “an exercise in pessimism and PR with little connection to the reality of moral progress made in the past half century.” Shermer cited reductions in the number of nuclear weapons since the 1980s and the absence of war between Europe’s great powers since World War II.

California Gov. Jerry Brown joined former U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz and former U.S. Secretary of Defense William Perry for a discussion at Stanford University after the unveiling of the clock.

Perry raised concerns about rhetoric from Russia about the use of nuclear weapons and said the threat of nuclear disaster was greater today than during the Cold War. Shultz said the U.S. needs to engage Russia and China. Brown warned about “tipping points” in the fight against climate change.

“And around a tipping point, we may not be able to come back to a stable planet or one we’ll find very comfortable to live in,” he said.

The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists was founded in 1945 by University of Chicago scientists who helped develop the first atomic weapons. The clock was created two years later.

The decision to move or leave the clock alone is made by the bulletin’s science and security board, which includes physicists and environmental scientists from around the world, in consultation with the bulletin’s Board of Sponsors, which includes more than a dozen Nobel laureates.

The closest the clock has come to midnight was two minutes away in 1953, when the Soviet Union tested a hydrogen bomb that followed a U.S. hydrogen bomb test.

Japan will join UN group on nuclear disarmament

January 28, 2016

Japan reconsiders, decides to join U.N. nuclear disarmament group

http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/politics/AJ201601280036

By HAJIMU TAKEDA/ Staff Writer

Tokyo, in a sharp reversal of policy, will now join a U.N. nuclear disarmament group even though it still does not want a treaty banning weapons of mass destruction.

Japan, the only nation to suffer the horrors of a nuclear attack, now ironically sits beneath the nuclear umbrella of its ally the United States so it originally abstained from the vote to set up the disarmament working group **along with 33 other nations, including NATO members.**

Tokyo's decision to now participate shows that it wants its own opinions on nuclear disarmament reflected in the group's discussions, such as its hope that the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty will be ratified by the nations that have so far refused to do so.

The establishment of the **Open-Ended Working Group on Nuclear Disarmament** was approved last autumn as a subsidiary body of the U.N. General Assembly.

The first session of the working group will be held in Geneva in February, with two more sessions scheduled for May and August.

In addition to the 34 abstentions, 12 countries voted against the proposal for setting up the working group, including the nuclear powers of the United States, Britain, France, China and Russia.

The new working group plans to present a recommendation on nuclear disarmament at a meeting of the U.N. General Assembly in October.

Japanese delegates are expected to attend a preliminary meeting in Geneva on Jan. 28, which will pick the chair and decide how the group's sessions should be managed.

In the meeting, they will argue that any recommendation made by the working group should be based on a unanimous endorsement, and not a vote.

"As far as numbers are concerned, the group of nonnuclear powers demanding legal measures is overwhelming," said a senior official with the Japanese Foreign Ministry. "If a vote is adopted to decide on the planned recommendation, Japan's argument will likely be ignored."

The working group was founded following **a strong push from Mexico, Austria, South Africa and other countries without nuclear weapons**, which called for "legal measures" to achieve nuclear disarmament. **The proposal was approved by 138 nations, about two-thirds of the U.N. member nations.**

Mexico and other nonnuclear nations are expected to work together to foster momentum toward a nuclear ban treaty.

Japan is not in favor of a nuclear ban treaty. The nation's defense policy remains unchanged in that it needs to benefit from the U.S. nuclear deterrent in the immediate future.

But it apparently decided on joining the working group on the condition that a variety of views should be reflected in the group's debate, including a view that legal measures refer not only to a treaty banning nuclear weapons, but also one banning the testing of nuclear weapons.

In that context, Japan concluded that Washington would not oppose its bid to join the working group. Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida, who is from Hiroshima, has pledged that Japan will lead global efforts toward a nuclear-free world.

In April, the nation will host a Group of Seven Foreign Ministers meeting in Hiroshima, the first time such talks have been held in the city leveled by a U.S. atomic bomb in 1945.

'Smaller' US bombs won't make the world safer

As U.S. Modernizes Nuclear Weapons, 'Smaller' Leaves Some Uneasy

http://www.nytimes.com/2016/01/12/science/as-us-modernizes-nuclear-weapons-smaller-leaves-some-uneasy.html?emc=edit_th_20160112&nl=todaysheadlines&nid=32427321&r=0

As North Korea dug tunnels at its nuclear test site last fall, watched by American spy satellites, the Obama administration was preparing a test of its own in the Nevada desert.

A fighter jet took off with a mock version of the nation's first precision-guided atom bomb. Adapted from an older weapon, it was designed with problems like North Korea in mind: Its computer brain and four maneuverable fins let it zero in on deeply buried targets like testing tunnels and weapon sites. And its yield, the bomb's explosive force, can be dialed up or down depending on the target, to minimize collateral damage.

In short, while the North Koreans have been thinking big — claiming to have built a hydrogen bomb, a boast that experts dismiss as wildly exaggerated — the Energy Department and the Pentagon have been readying a line of weapons that head in the opposite direction.

The build-it-smaller approach has set off a philosophical clash among those in Washington who think about the unthinkable.

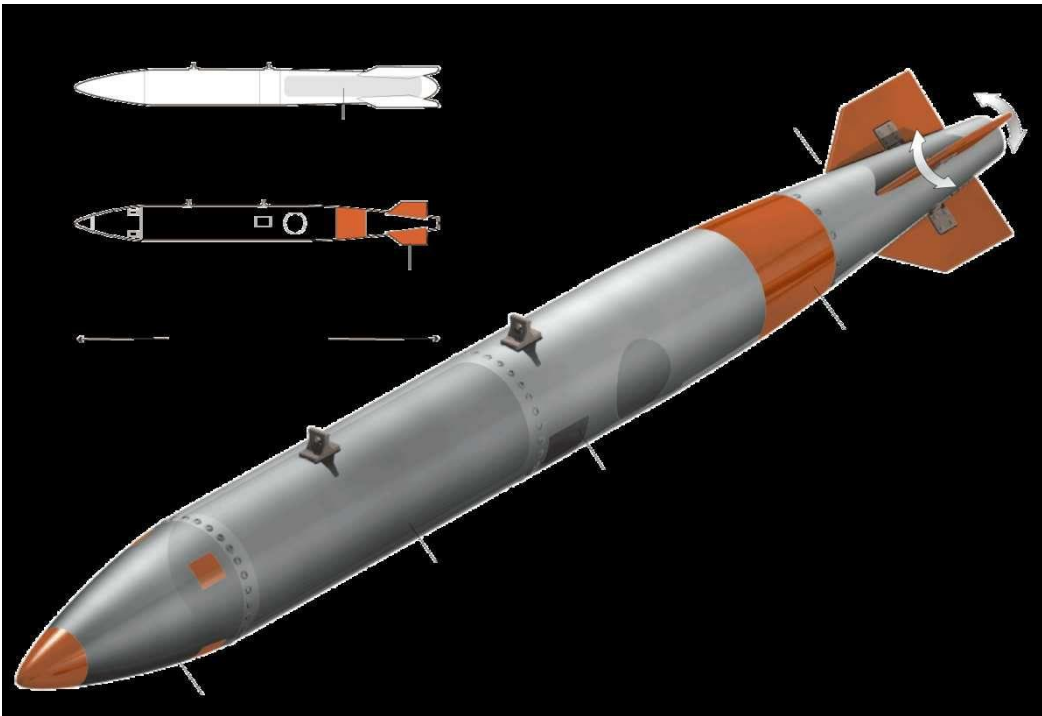
Mr. Obama has long advocated a "nuclear-free world." His lieutenants argue that modernizing existing weapons can produce a smaller and more reliable arsenal while making their use less likely because of the threat they can pose. The changes, they say, are improvements rather than wholesale redesigns, fulfilling the president's pledge to make no new nuclear arms.

But critics, including a number of former Obama administration officials, look at the same set of facts and see a very different future. The explosive innards of the revitalized weapons may not be entirely new, they argue, but the smaller yields and better targeting can make the arms more tempting to use — even to use first, rather than in retaliation.

Gen. James E. Cartwright, a retired vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff who was among Mr. Obama's most influential nuclear strategists, said he backed the upgrades because precise targeting allowed the United States to hold fewer weapons. But "what going smaller does," he acknowledged, "is to make the weapon more thinkable."

A More Accurate Atom Bomb

The United States military is replacing the fixed tail section of the B61 bomb with steerable fins and adding other advanced technology. The result is a bomb that can make more accurate nuclear strikes and a warhead whose destructive power can be adjusted to minimize collateral damage and radioactive fallout.



OLDER B61 nuclear bomb

New steerable tail fins
and navigation
system

Old model had a parachute and a fixed tail section.

The new VERSION: B61-12

New model has more electronics and steerable fins.

Length: 11.8 feet

Added safety and
security features

Firing system and
environmental sensors

Warhead with four selectable
power options

Radar and electronics

Source: Federation of American Scientists

By The New York Times

As Mr. Obama enters his final year in office, the debate has deep implications for military strategy, federal spending and his legacy.

The B61 Model 12, the bomb flight-tested last year in Nevada, is the first of five new warhead types planned as part of an atomic revitalization estimated to cost up to \$1 trillion over three decades. As a family, the weapons and their delivery systems move toward the small, the stealthy and the precise.

Already there are hints of a new arms race. Russia called the B61 tests “irresponsible” and “openly provocative.” China is said to be especially worried about plans for a nuclear-tipped cruise missile. And North Korea last week defended its pursuit of a hydrogen bomb by describing the “ever-growing nuclear threat” from the United States.

The more immediate problem for the White House is that many of its alumni have raised questions about the modernization push and missed opportunities for arms control.

"It's unaffordable and unneeded," said Andrew C. Weber, a former assistant secretary of defense and former director of the Nuclear Weapons Council, an interagency body that oversees the nation's arsenal. He cited in particular the advanced cruise missile, estimated to cost up to \$30 billion for roughly 1,000 weapons.

"The president has an opportunity to set the stage for a global ban on nuclear cruise missiles," Mr. Weber said in an interview. "It's a big deal in terms of reducing the risks of nuclear war."

Last week, Brian P. McKeon, the principal deputy under secretary of defense for policy, argued that anyone who looks impartially at Mr. Obama's nuclear initiatives in total sees major progress toward the goals of a smaller force and a safer world — themes the White House highlighted on Monday in advance of the president's State of the Union address.

"We've cleaned up loose nuclear material around the globe, and gotten the Iran deal," removing a potential threat for at least a decade, Mr. McKeon said.

He acknowledged that other pledges — including treaties on nuclear testing and the production of bomb fuel — have been stuck, and that the president's hopes of winning further arms cuts in negotiations with Russia "ran into a blockade after the events in Ukraine."

He specifically defended the arsenal's modernization, saying the new B61 bomb "creates more strategic stability."

Early in his tenure, Mr. Obama invested much political capital not in upgrades but in reductions, becoming the first president to make nuclear disarmament a centerpiece of American defense policy.

In Prague in 2009, he pledged in a landmark speech that he would take concrete steps toward a nuclear-free world and "reduce the role of nuclear weapons in our national security strategy." The Nobel committee cited the pledge that year in awarding him the Peace Prize.

A modest arms reduction treaty with Russia seemed like a first step. Then, in 2010, the administration released a sweeping plan that Mr. Obama called a fulfillment of his atomic vow. The United States, he declared, "will not develop new nuclear warheads or pursue new military missions or new capabilities." The overall plan was to rearrange old components of nuclear arms into revitalized weapons. The resulting hybrids would be far more reliable, meaning the administration could argue that the nation would need fewer weapons in the far future.

Inside the administration, some early enthusiasts for Mr. Obama's vision began to worry that it was being turned on its head.

In late 2013, the first of the former insiders spoke out. Philip E. Coyle III and Steve Fetter, who had recently left national security posts, helped write an 80-page critique of the nuclear plan by the Union of Concerned Scientists, a private group that made its name during the Cold War, arguing for arms reductions.

American allies and adversaries, the report warned, may see the modernization "as violating the administration's pledge not to develop or deploy" new warheads. The report, which urged a more cautious approach, cited a finding by federal advisory scientists: that simply refurbishing weapons in their existing configurations could keep them in service for decades.

"I'm not a pacifist," Mr. Coyle, a former head of Pentagon weapons testing, said in an interview. But the administration, he argued, was planning for too big an arsenal. "They got the math wrong in terms of how many weapons we need, how many varieties we need and whether we need a surge capacity" for the crash production of nuclear arms.

The insider critiques soon focused on individual weapons, starting with the B61 Model 12. The administration's plan was to merge four old B61 models into a single version that greatly reduced their range of destructive power. It would have a "dial-a-yield" feature whose lowest setting was only 2 percent as powerful as the bomb dropped on Hiroshima in 1945.

The plan seemed reasonable, critics said, until attention fell on the bomb's new tail section and steerable fins. The Federation of American Scientists, a Washington research group, argued that the high accuracy and low destructive settings meant military commanders might press to use the bomb in an attack, knowing the radioactive fallout and collateral damage would be limited.

Last year, General Cartwright echoed that point on PBS's "NewsHour." He has huge credibility in nuclear circles: He was head of the United States Strategic Command, which has military authority over the nation's nuclear arms, before serving as vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

In a recent interview in his office at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, in Washington, General Cartwright said the overall modernization plan might change how military commanders looked at the risks of using nuclear weapons.

"What if I bring real precision to these weapons?" he asked. "Does it make them more usable? It could be." Some of the biggest names in nuclear strategy see a specific danger in the next weapon in the modernization lineup: the new cruise missile, a "standoff weapon" that bombers can launch far from their targets.

"Mr. President, kill the new cruise missile," read the headline of a recent article by Mr. Weber, the former assistant secretary of defense, and William J. Perry, a secretary of defense under President Bill Clinton and an author of the plan to gradually eliminate nuclear weapons that captivated Mr. Obama's imagination and endorsement.

They argued that the cruise missile might sway a future president to contemplate "limited nuclear war." Worse yet, they said, because the missile comes in nuclear and non-nuclear varieties, a foe under attack might assume the worst and overreact, initiating nuclear war.

The critique stung because Mr. Perry, now at Stanford, is a revered figure in Democratic defense circles and a mentor to Ashton B. Carter, the secretary of defense.

Mr. McKeon, the Pentagon official, after describing his respect for Mr. Perry, said the military concluded that it needed the cruise missile to "give the president more options than a manned bomber to penetrate air defenses."

In an interview, James N. Miller, who helped develop the modernization plan before leaving his post as under secretary of defense for policy in 2014, said the smaller, more precise weapons would maintain the nation's nuclear deterrent while reducing risks for civilians near foreign military targets.

"Though not everyone agrees, I think it's the right way to proceed," Mr. Miller said. "Minimizing civilian casualties if deterrence fails is both a more credible and a more ethical approach."

General Cartwright summarized the logic of enhanced deterrence with a gun metaphor: "It makes the trigger easier to pull but makes the need to pull the trigger less likely."

Administration officials often stress the modernization plan's benign aspects. Facing concerned allies, Madelyn R. Creedon, an Energy Department deputy administrator, argued in October that the efforts "are not providing any new military capabilities" but simply replacing wires, batteries, plastics and other failing materials.

"What we are doing," she said, "is just taking these old systems, replacing their parts and making sure that they can survive."

In a recent report to Congress, the Energy Department, responsible for upgrading the warheads, said this was the fastest way to reduce the nuclear stockpile, promoting the effort as "Modernize to Downsize."

The new weapons will let the nation scrap a Cold War standby called the B83, a powerful city buster. The report stressed that the declines in “overall destructive power” support Mr. Obama’s goal of “pursuing the security of a world without nuclear weapons.”

That argument, though, is extremely long term: Stockpile reductions would manifest only after three decades of atomic revitalization, many presidencies from now. One of those presidents may well cancel the reduction plans — most of the candidates now seeking the Republican nomination oppose cutbacks in the nuclear arsenal.

But the bigger risk to the modernization plan may be its expense — upward of a trillion dollars if future presidents go the next step and order new bombers, submarines and land-based missiles, and upgrades to eight factories and laboratories.

“Insiders don’t believe it will ever happen,” said Mr. Coyle, the former White House official. “It’s hard to imagine that many administrations following through.”

Meanwhile, other veterans of the Obama administration ask what happened.

“I think there’s a universal sense of frustration,” said Ellen O. Tauscher, a former under secretary of state for arms control. She said many who joined the administration with high expectations for arms reductions now feel disillusioned.

“Somebody has to get serious,” she added. “We’re spending billions of dollars on a status quo that doesn’t make us any safer.”

New UN working group on nuke ban: What role for Japan?

February 5, 2016

EDITORIAL: Japan should lead U.N. talks to establish nuclear ban treaty

<http://ajw.asahi.com/article/views/editorial/AJ201602050023>

The Japanese government has decided to join a new working group on nuclear disarmament that the United Nations will set up later this month.

Non-nuclear weapon states are deepening their recognition in recent years of the dangerous and inhumane nature of nuclear arms. **A momentum is picking up for a ban on nuclear weapons under international law.**

The working group will be established in the context of that new trend. It is only too natural for Japan, the only country that has suffered atomic bombings during war, to join the undertaking. A key question facing Japan is what role it will play at that venue.

We hope Tokyo will live up to the remarks made by Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida, who said that Japan should “lead the international community in working toward a world without nuclear weapons.”

More than a quarter-century after the end of the Cold War, the five major nuclear weapon states--the United States, Russia, Britain, France and China--still possess large arsenals of nuclear arms.

The Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) obligates those five nations to pursue nuclear disarmament in exchange for granting them, and no other country, the status of nuclear weapon states. But efforts to

shrink their arsenals have stalled in recent years amid ongoing upgrades, including in the accuracy of attack capabilities.

With the spread of nuclear technology, in addition, there is no end to the list of nations, such as North Korea, which are challenging the NPT in pursuing the development of nuclear arms.

The rift between the non-nuclear weapon states, which are calling for disarmament and abolition of nuclear arms for fear of nightmarish scenarios, in which nuclear missiles are launched by mistake or are obtained by terrorists, and the nuclear weapon states, which do not want to part with their atomic power, is widening more than ever.

The NPT Review Conferences and the Conference on Disarmament, both of which are operated on a consensus basis, are not enough on their own to overcome the resistance of nuclear weapon states to move the discussion forward.

That was why the momentum has rapidly spread for initially signing a treaty or taking other legal measures to ban nuclear arms, which will be labeled as inhumane and unethical, and thereafter seeking their abolition on the basis of that global standard.

The new working group will be set up for that objective.

During the U.N. General Assembly last autumn, 12 countries, including the five major nuclear weapon states, opposed the resolution for setting up the working group, whereas 34 others, including Japan and NATO member countries, both under the U.S. nuclear umbrella, abstained from voting. The resolution, notwithstanding, was approved by an overwhelming majority of 138 nations, which account for some two-thirds of all U.N. member states.

During an organizational session held informally last week, Tokyo, which remained noncommittal on whether it would join the working group, argued in support of a consensus-based approach.

Efforts are certainly necessary for seeking broad-based approvals, including from nuclear weapon states. But being inflexible on reaching a consensus will never help break the current stalemate over nuclear disarmament.

Japan should make constructive contributions to a prospective ban on nuclear arms.

It could study concrete subjects, including, for example, the coverage and order of prospective bans that could draw nuclear weapon states into discussions, and measures for a safe departure from the nuclear umbrella.

More than a few citizens of nuclear weapon states, including the United States, are calling for nuclear arms to be abolished. In-depth views should be exchanged both at home and abroad.

--The Asahi Shimbun, Feb. 1

Ethical components to the nuclear weapons debate

February 10, 2016

The eight deadly nuclear sins

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2016/02/10/commentary/world-commentary/eight-deadly-nuclear-sins/#.VrtmtVKDmot>

by Ramesh Thakur

CANBERRA – Ethics is central to the vision and pursuit of the good international life in a globalized and highly interdependent system. Underlying the struggle for power are ethical contestations over norms and values that define who nation states are.

The balance of power on its own cannot provide a stable global order; it has to be backed by a common set of values, and international practices appropriate to the values. The shared vision of a good international society, and the ethical principles underpinning them, find their most authoritative and eloquent articulation as the purposes and principles enunciated in the U.N. Charter.

Power and principles intersect at the United Nations and also on nuclear politics. Most countries have chosen nuclear abstinence because people overwhelmingly abhor the bomb. **Their very destructiveness robs them of political and military utility and renders them immoral.**

There are at least seven distinct ethical components to the nuclear debate.

First, nuclear weapons are the most indiscriminately inhumane ever invented. Their lethal destructiveness constitutes an existential threat to all human beings, not just to the leaders, soldiers and citizens of the country that is the target, nor even just the countries fighting a nuclear war. Indeed a full-blown nuclear war would destroy the Earth. It is hard to see how any human being can claim and exercise the moral right to play God in making such a decision.

On the only occasions in which they were used as weapons of war in 1945, no one really knew the game-changing nature of these weapons and the historical evidence suggests that the Truman administration viewed them as an incrementally improved weapon of war.

The Catholic bishops of America in the 1980s and the ayatollahs of Iran today are united in the belief that nuclear weapons are morally proscribed by their respective religions. There is absolutely no evidence to suggest the ayatollahs' pronouncements on this subject, branding the bomb as fundamentally un-Islamic, are any less genuine and authentic than those of the Catholic Church.

The second, related ethical concern is that nuclear weapons obliterate the distinction between combatants and civilians that is central to just about every moral code in all cultures and civilizations. Civilians have always been attacked amid armed conflicts and their rights and dignity violated in numerous ways, for example mass rape. But the ethical code, including warrior's honor, has never held this to be permissible. It is hard to see how nuclear weapons can be just war-compliant with regard to the proportionality and civilian-combatant distinction requirements.

Third, following from this deterrence as a doctrine, even short of use, proves problematical. For the limited utility of deterrence (only the romantics and dreamers believe in its absolute utility) rests on the threat of inflicting mass killings on civilians.

On this point, in 1983 the Catholic bishops had granted "a strictly conditional moral acceptance of deterrence" in order to protect the independence and freedom of nations and peoples. In December 2014 the Holy See updated the religious prohibition and erased the possession-use distinction to place nuclear deterrence outside morally permissible limits.

Fourth, by fostering nuclear apartheid, the existing nuclear regime fails the test of inter-state equity.

Possession of nuclear weapons is NPT-compliant for a tiny minority of five countries (China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States: the N5) and for everyone else it is NPT-illicit.

In actual practice, however, Israel has never been subjected to normative sanction by the Western powers — the dominant international powers since 1945. Gradually over the past decade many countries have come round to accepting India and Pakistan (but not yet North Korea) also as de facto nuclear-armed states.

Fifth, countries lack individual or collective capacity to cope with the humanitarian impacts of a nuclear war. From this it follows that for the sake of humanity's survival, nuclear weapons must never be used again under any circumstances. And the only guarantee of non-use is total elimination.

The initiative thus picks up on and updates the old World Court project in challenging the compliance of nuclear weapons use with international humanitarian law. Moreover, the leaders of the nuclear-armed states have an ethical obligation to inform and educate their citizens about the reality of incapacity to cope with the devastation of a nuclear war.

Sixth, if the consequences of a nuclear war are systemic then decisions on arsenals, doctrines and use cannot be solely a matter of sovereign privilege.

The same is true with regards to the safety and security aspects of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. Because a bad accident in one country can have horrific effects in neighboring countries, they have the moral right to have their voices heard in the decision to build and operate nuclear plants to global safety standards: no incineration without representation.

Seventh, from inception the normative bargain in the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons has always been that those without nuclear weapons would not pursue that option; all States Parties would cooperate in preventing the spread of nuclear weapons to anyone else; and the five with the bomb would enter into negotiations to get rid of their own weapons.

The first part in this three-way equation has been honored by all countries bar one (North Korea); the second part has been successful except for Israel, India and Pakistan; and the most glaring failure has been with respect to the third legal obligation (as per the World Court's advisory opinion in 1996) to nuclear disarmament by the N5.

When the NPT entered into force in 1970, there were more than 38,000 nuclear warheads in the world, with just over 26,000 in the U.S. arsenal and under 12,000 in the Soviet stockpile. Sixteen years later, these numbers had climbed to over 64,000 (global), 24,000 (U.S.) and 40,000 (Soviet Union).

Spokesmen from the N5 countries perform Olympic-quality verbal gymnastics in explaining how this was in conformity with their disarmament obligation under Article VI of the NPT. And of course not a single one of them has disarmed even now.

The latest NPT review conference, held every five years to review and renew progress, collapsed in failure last May. This is further evidence that the NPT has exhausted its normative potential in containing and eliminating the nuclear threat. All countries that have them betray — through stockpiles, expanding numbers, modernization and upgrades already underway or planned, doctrines, force postures and deployment practices — the intention to retain them indefinitely as an anchor of national security.

This then raises the final moral dilemma. Tom Doyle of Texas State University asks: At which point do non-nuclear weapon states conclude that defection from the NPT regime is likely to be politically effective, is morally permissible and may in fact be the ethically responsible course of action?

An analogous situation is with membership of a club that discriminates on grounds of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation. One can remain a member or even join in order to try and change the membership rules from the inside. But if efforts fail over many repeated attempts, at some point the decision has to be made to resign or become morally compromised with respect to one's own ethical code. *Ramesh Thakur is director of the Center for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament, Crawford School of Public Policy, Australian National University.*

Beware of "nuclear winter"

Let's End the Peril of a Nuclear Winter

http://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/11/opinion/lets-end-the-peril-of-a-nuclear-winter.html?emc=edit_th_20160211&nl=todaysheadlines&nid=32427321&r=0

By ALAN ROBOCK and OWEN BRIAN TOON FEB. 11, 2016



Credit Jed McGowan

IN the early 1980s, American and Russian scientists working together outlined a stark vision of the Cold War future. In a battle between the two superpowers, smoke from fires ignited by nuclear explosions would be so dense that it would block out the sun, turning the earth cold, dark and dry, killing plants and preventing agriculture for at least a year.

This dystopia became known as nuclear winter.

We haven't heard much about this apocalyptic future in recent years. But the research into the destructive potential of a war involving nuclear weapons has continued. Even with the reduced nuclear arsenals that the United States and Russia agreed to in 2010, we have the ability not only to set off instantaneous destruction, but also to push global temperatures below freezing, even in summer. Crops would die and starvation could kill most of humanity.

But it is not just the superpowers that threaten the planet.

A nuclear war between any two countries using 100 Hiroshima-size atom bombs, less than half of the combined arsenals of India and Pakistan, could produce climate change unseen in recorded human history.

This is why we should celebrate the recent agreement with Iran, which may stop it from producing a nuclear weapon. And it is also why we should look with deep alarm at North Korea's recent launching of a rocket to put a satellite in orbit, in what is believed to be an effort to develop an intercontinental ballistic missile.

Nine countries have nuclear arsenals, with an estimated total of 15,695 weapons, according to the Ploughshares Fund, a global securities group. About 94 percent are held by the United States and Russia. Except for North Korea, the other nuclear nations have each kept their arsenals at roughly 100 to 300 weapons. All have the destructive power to alter the global environment.

These weapons have not been a deterrent to war or aggression. But even if you think they can be, how many would you have to use? The answer is, probably one.

There are simply too many nuclear weapons in the world, by as much as a factor of 1,000, for anyone, anywhere, to be safe from the potential effects of even a small war. The chance that nuclear weapons would be used by mistake, in a panic after an international incident, by a computer hacker or by a rogue leader of a nuclear nation can be eliminated only by the removal of the weapons themselves.

We were among the scientists involved in the initial research that discovered the potential for nuclear winter. More modern and advanced climate modeling has confirmed the initial findings and shown that the effects would last for more than a decade. The reason is that smoke from nuclear conflagrations would rise as high as 25 miles into the atmosphere, where it would be protected from rain and take at least 10 years to dissipate.

In more recent research, we looked at the potential impact of a nuclear war between India and Pakistan, with each country detonating 50 Hiroshima-size bombs. These explosions would produce so much smoke that temperatures would plunge, shortening growing seasons and threatening the global food supply.

Our calculations, based on how crops grow in different weather, showed that wheat, rice, corn and soybean production could be reduced by 10 percent to 40 percent overall for five years. The ozone layer would also be depleted, allowing more ultraviolet radiation to reach the earth's surface.

We hope this continuing research on the effects of even a so-called small nuclear war will highlight the threat to the planet in the same way that visions of a nuclear winter did more than three decades ago for Russian and American leaders, when the total number of nuclear weapons peaked at about 70,000.

As Ronald Reagan put it in 1985, "A great many reputable scientists are telling us that such a war could just end up in no victory for anyone because we would wipe out the earth as we know it." Mikhail S. Gorbachev, the last leader of the Soviet Union, echoed Reagan's comment in an interview in 2000: "Models made by Russian and American scientists showed that a nuclear war would result in a nuclear winter that would be extremely destructive to all life on earth; the knowledge of that was a great stimulus to us" to reduce the size of nuclear arsenals in both countries.

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The Obama administration's goal is to work for the elimination of nuclear weapons, with no specific timetable. But President Obama does not need a treaty with the Russians to take this action. He can just follow the lead of President George H. W. Bush, who unilaterally reduced America's nuclear arsenal as the Soviet Union was disintegrating.

With less than a year left in office, President Obama could add to his legacy by sending a similar signal to the Russians today. We could reduce our arsenal from roughly 7,000 weapons to 1,000, eliminating land-based missiles and outlining plans to further reduce air- and submarine-based missiles.

Mr. Obama said himself in 2009 that “the existence of thousands of nuclear weapons is the most dangerous legacy of the Cold War” and that the United States, as the only nation to have used these weapons, had “a moral responsibility” to seek a world without them. “We have to insist,” he said, “Yes, we can.”

Alan Robock is a professor of environmental sciences at Rutgers University. Owen Brian Toon is a professor of atmospheric and oceanic sciences at the University of Colorado, Boulder.

Nuclear weapons needed as regular "raincoat"

February 15, 2015

Top South Korean lawmaker calls for nuclear arms

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2016/02/15/asia-pacific/top-south-korean-lawmaker-calls-for-nuclear-arms/#.VsGhgOaDmot>

AFP-JIJI

SEOUL – A top ruling party official called Monday for South Korea to develop its own nuclear deterrent to combat the growing nuclear and missile threat from North Korea.

Support for a nuclear-armed South Korea is a minority voice in the country, but one that grows louder after every nuclear test by the North.

U.S. tactical nuclear weapons were withdrawn from South Korea in late 1991, though the country remains under the protection of the U.S. nuclear umbrella.

In the wake of North Korea’s fourth nuclear test last month, Won Yoo-cheol, the ruling Saenuri Party’s floor leader, said it was time for the weapons to be redeployed or for South Korea to get its own.

“We cannot borrow an umbrella from a neighbor every time it rains. We need to have a raincoat and wear it ourselves,” Won was quoted as saying by Yonhap news agency in a speech to the National Assembly. South Korea is one of 190 signatories to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty — a pact that North Korea walked out on in 2003.

There are few takers in Washington for the idea of having a nuclear-armed South Korea that would set back a long-standing, if repeatedly violated, principle of not allowing new nations into the nuclear club. In an effort to reassure one of its key Asian allies, the U.S. Air Force sent a B-52 bomber on a sortie over South Korea shortly after the North’s claimed hydrogen bomb test on Jan. 6.

South Korea’s late military strongman Park Chung-hee — the father of current President Park Geun-hye — flirted with nuclear weapons in the 1970s when then-President Jimmy Carter planned to remove U.S. troops from the peninsula.

Highly dangerous radioactive material stolen in Iraq last November

February 18, 2016

'Highly dangerous' radioactive material stolen in '15 in Iraq has arms potential

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2016/02/18/world/highly-dangerous-radioactive-material-stolen-15-iraq-arms-potential/#.VsW7NeaDmov>

Reuters

BAGHDAD – Iraq is searching for “highly dangerous” radioactive material stolen last year, according to an environment ministry document and seven security, environmental and provincial officials who fear it could be used as a weapon if acquired by Islamic State.

The material, stored in a protective case the size of a laptop computer, went missing in November from a storage facility near the southern city of Basra belonging to U.S. oilfield services company Weatherford, the document seen by Reuters showed and officials confirmed.

A spokesman for Iraq’s environment ministry said he could not discuss the issue, citing national security concerns.

Weatherford said in a statement that it was not responsible or liable for the theft. “We do not own, operate or control sources or the bunker where the sources are stored,” it said.

The material, which uses gamma rays to test flaws in materials used for oil and gas pipelines in a process called industrial gamma radiography, is owned by Istanbul-based SGS Turkey, according to the document and officials.

An SGS official in Iraq declined comment and referred Reuters to its Turkish headquarters, which did not respond to phone calls and emails.

The U.S. State Department said it was aware of the reports but has seen no sign that Islamic State or other militant groups have acquired it.

A U.S. official said separately that Iraq had reported a missing specialized camera containing highly radioactive Iridium-192 to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the Vienna-based U.N. nuclear watchdog, in November.

“They’ve been looking for it ever since. Whether it was just misplaced, or actually stolen, isn’t clear,” said the official, who requested anonymity because of the sensitivity of the matter.

The environment ministry document, dated Nov. 30 and addressed to the ministry’s Center for Prevention of Radiation, describes “the theft of a highly dangerous radioactive source of Ir-192 with highly radioactive activity belonging to SGS from a depot belonging to Weatherford in the Rafidhia area of Basra province.

A senior environment ministry official based in Basra, who declined to be named as he is not authorized to speak publicly, told Reuters the device contained up to 10 grams (0.35 ounces) of Ir-192 “capsules,” a radioactive isotope of iridium also used to treat cancer.

The material is classed as a Category 2 radioactive source by the IAEA, meaning that if not managed properly it could cause permanent injury to a person in close proximity to it for minutes or hours, and could be fatal to someone exposed for a period of hours to days.

How harmful exposure can be is determined by a number of factors such as the material's strength and age, which Reuters could not immediately determine. The ministry document said the material posed a risk of bodily and environmental harm as well as a national security threat.

Large quantities of Ir-192 have gone missing before in the United States, Britain and other countries, stoking fears among security officials that it could be used to make a dirty bomb.

A dirty bomb combines nuclear material with conventional explosives to contaminate an area with radiation, in contrast to a nuclear weapon, which uses nuclear fission to trigger a vastly more powerful blast.

"We are afraid the radioactive element will fall into the hands of Daesh," said a senior security official with knowledge of the theft, using an Arabic acronym for Islamic State.

"They could simply attach it to explosives to make a dirty bomb," said the official, who works at the interior ministry and spoke on condition of anonymity as he is also not authorized to speak publicly.

There was no indication the material had come into the possession of Islamic State, which seized territory in Iraq and Syria in 2014 but does not control areas near Basra.

A State Department spokesman declined comment on whether the missing material might be suitable for use in a dirty bomb.

The security official, based in Baghdad, told Reuters there were no immediate suspects for the theft. But the official said the initial inquiry suggested the perpetrators had specific knowledge of the material and the facility. "No broken locks, no smashed doors and no evidence of forced entry," he said.

An operations manager for Iraqi security firm Taiz, which was contracted to protect the facility, declined comment, citing instructions from Iraqi security authorities.

A spokesman for Basra operations command, responsible for security in Basra province, said army, police and intelligence forces were working "day and night" to locate the material.

The army and police have responsibility for security in the country's south, where Iranian-backed Shiite Muslim militias and criminal gangs also operate.

Iraqi forces are battling Islamic State in the country's north and west, backed by a U.S.-led coalition. The Sunni Muslim militant group has been accused of using chemical weapons on more than one occasion over the past few years.

The closest area fully controlled by Islamic State is more than 500 km (300 miles) north of Basra in the western province of Anbar. Islamic State controls no territory in the predominantly Shiite southern provinces but has claimed bomb attacks there, including one that killed 10 people in October in the district where the Weatherford facility is located.

Besides the risk of a dirty bomb, the radioactive material could cause harm simply by being left exposed in a public place for several days, said David Albright, a physicist and president of the Washington-based Institute for Science and International Security.

"If they left it in some crowded place, that would be more of the risk, if they kept it together but without shielding," he said. "Certainly it's not insignificant. You could cause some panic with this. They would want to get this back."

The senior environmental official said authorities were worried that whoever stole the material would mishandle it, leading to radioactive pollution of "catastrophic proportions."

A second senior environment ministry official, also based in Basra, said counterradiation teams had begun inspecting oil sites, scrapyards and border crossings to locate the device after an emergency task force raised the alarm on Nov. 13.

Two Basra provincial government officials said they were directed on Nov. 25 to coordinate with local hospitals. "We instructed hospitals in Basra to be alert to any burn cases caused by radioactivity and inform security forces immediately," said one.

40 years of sit-ins for A-Bomb survivor

February 19, 2016

Hibakusha: A-Bomb survivor holds sit-ins protesting nuclear tests for over 40 years

<http://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20160219/p2a/00m/0na/014000c>

Takeshi Yamakawa reflects on the over 40 years he has kept up his sit-in protests against nuclear weapon tests, at the Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum in Nagasaki, on Jan. 13, 2016. (Mainichi)

NAGASAKI -- Atomic bomb survivor Takeshi Yamakawa was exasperated this year when he read a newspaper report about North Korea's fourth nuclear weapon test.

Yamakawa, 79, is an organizer for a Nagasaki citizens' group that holds protest sit-ins whenever a country conducts a nuclear test. On Jan. 10, the group held its 400th protest sit-in at Peace Park in Nagasaki, in front of the peace statue there.

"I had hoped that 399 times would be enough," says Yamakawa. Around 40 people including high school students and other young people participated in the Jan. 10 sit-in, where a member read aloud their message of protest, saying, "Humanity and nuclear weapons cannot co-exist. This is human knowledge that we have learned firsthand." Many news media outlets covered the anger and disappointment of people in the areas hit by the atomic bombings over the North Korea nuclear tests.

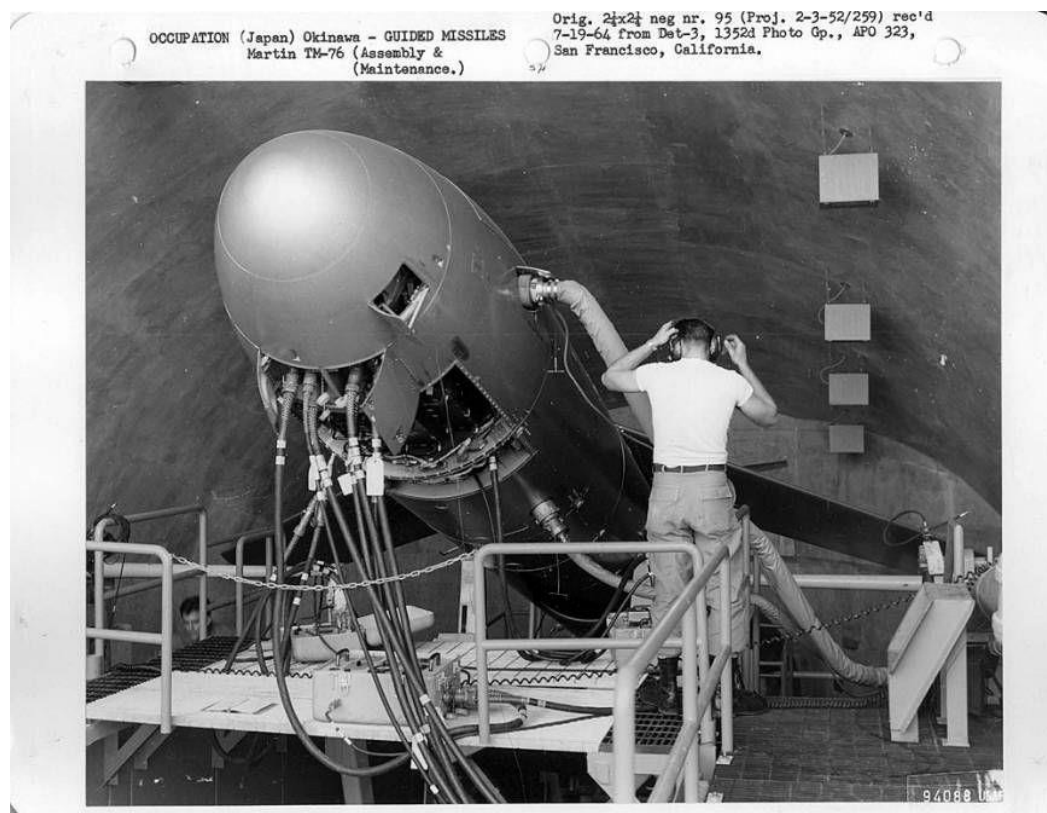
The sit-ins started on Aug. 17, 1974, in response to nuclear tests by the United States, the Soviet Union and France. They were called for by Ayao Imada, an A-bomb survivor whose father, a Buddhist monk, died from the Nagasaki bomb. "Let's show the anger of the bombed areas through action," Imada had urged. The first sit-in had five participants, including Imada and Yamakawa, who was an elementary school teacher. With vests and banners reading "Let's immediately stop the nuclear tests," the protest was held silently in Peace Park.

It was the middle of the Cold War then. Yamakawa says, "As long as the various countries of the world don't abandon their nuclear weapon policies, the nuclear arms race and nuclear tests will continue. The A-bomb survivors, who experienced the terror of the bomb firsthand, felt anger and a sense of crisis." Starting from the sixth sit-in, the location was moved to what is currently the front of the peace statue in the park, a location visited by tourists, in order to make the protests more visible. There was at least one time when the only person at the sit-in was Imada.

"The sit-ins are a battle of patience between sanity and insanity. We mustn't lose," Imada said. Having started with only five participants, the sit-ins have continued for over 40 years now, through rain and snow. They have brought about the formation of citizens' groups around the prefecture that protest nuclear tests, and young people started to join the protests.

In November last year, Imada -- a teacher of peace to Yamakawa -- died at age 86. Yamakawa became the only remaining person at the sit-ins who was there from the beginning. Imada had said, "If you appeal to society, it will resonate and your circle will expand. Let's do what we can to leave a peaceful world without the worry of nuclear war to the next generation. Have hope." Those words are inherited by Yamakawa and the young generations, and continue to be the hope of Nagasaki 71 years after the A-bomb.

Official: Nukes stored on Okinawa during Cold War



Technicians work on a Mace B cruise missile on Okinawa in April 1962. Carrying a 1-megaton W28 nuclear warhead, the rocket-boosted, jet-propelled Mace missile could be fired at six minutes' notice. | NARA, STILL PICTURES UNIT, RECORD GROUP 342B, BOX 1470

February 20, 2016

In a first US admits nuclear weapons were stored in Okinawa during Cold War

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2016/02/20/national/history/first-u-s-admits-nuclear-weapons-stored-okinawa-cold-war/#.VsgrAuaDmot>

by Jesse Johnson
Staff Writer

Long an open secret, the U.S. government has for the first time officially acknowledged that nuclear weapons were stored on Okinawa during the Cold War.

In a statement on the Department of Defense's Open Government website, the Pentagon revealed Friday "that U.S. nuclear weapons were deployed on Okinawa prior to Okinawa's reversion to Japan on May 15, 1972."

The Defense Department statement also acknowledged "that the U.S. government conducted internal discussion and discussions with Japanese government officials regarding the possible re-introduction of nuclear weapons onto Okinawa in the event of an emergency or crisis situation."

Although widely known — various accounts and documents of a secret deal had previously shed light on the storage of atomic weapons on the islands both before and after Okinawa's reversion — the issue had been controversial because **Japanese leaders and U.S. officials had consistently denied the presence of such weapons within Japanese territory.**

In a 1967 address to the Diet, Prime Minister Eisuke Sato introduced the nation's **Three Non-Nuclear Principles**, which, reflecting public sentiment, have guided the country's nuclear policy since.

The three principles, which helped Sato win the Nobel Peace Prize in 1974, stated that Japan shall neither possess nor manufacture nuclear weapons, nor shall it permit their introduction into Japanese territory.

The National Security Archive at George Washington University said in a posting Friday that "however welcome the release may be, its significance is somewhat tempered by the astonishing fact that U.S. Air Force photographs of nuclear weapons on the island have been publicly available for over 25 years."

The nongovernmental group posted several photos, which were originally released in 1990 from U.S. Air Force collections at the National Archives and Records Administration. The photos had apparently gone unnoticed until now.

Okinawa remains home to a large number of U.S. military bases, and has been the site of recent protests over the transfer of U.S. Marine Corps Air Station Futenma, which has dominated headlines over the past year.

Japan is the only nation to have been attacked with nuclear weapons. The atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945 killed an estimated 200,000 people and, ultimately, led to the Japan's surrender in World War II.

All victims of nukes unite!

February 20, 2016

Hibakusha: Hiroshima 'black rain' victim encouraged by plaintiff in Fukushima class action case
<http://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20160220/p2a/00m/0na/022000c>

At the end of January, just after a spell of cold weather had swept across the Japanese archipelago, Seiji Takato checked a freshly printed newsletter he had been working on at his office in Hiroshima. He appeared satisfied. The newsletter contained a message from Ruiko Muto, the head of a group of plaintiffs

seeking criminal prosecution of parties including Tokyo Electric Power Co. over the leak of radioactively contaminated water from the utility's crippled Fukushima No. 1 Nuclear Power Plant into the ocean. The 75-year-old former high school biology teacher and his acquaintances decided to publish the newsletter to show support for a group of 64 people who had filed a class action lawsuit against the Hiroshima prefectural and municipal governments. **The 64 plaintiffs were demanding that those who were showered with "black rain" (rain mixed with fallout) in the wake of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima on Aug. 6, 1945, be recognized as A-bomb sufferers and be given handbooks that would enable them to receive health care benefits.**

For the first issue of the newsletter, Takato, a black rain victim himself, included a piece by Muto.

"The case you have brought to the court is a very important lawsuit for Fukushima that deals with health damage caused by exposures to low doses of radiation. ... Let's join hands in a fight to protect all lives from nuclear threats," reads Muto's message.

Takato has paid attention to the government's designation of evacuation areas around the Fukushima plant and the lifting of evacuation orders after the nuclear disaster, and he felt similarities with the handling of black rain, as authorities drew lines between the zones where people would be recognized as hibakusha and other areas. The health damage caused by exposure to radiation cannot be determined with sharp lines like those on a map.

"I always think about Fukushima," Takato says. He asked Muto to write a piece for the newsletter via a mutual acquaintance.

In the course of meeting with Fukushima evacuees who had left their hometowns to come to Hiroshima and in talking with them on multiple occasions over the past five years, Takato sensed a perception among evacuees that evacuation was a bad thing. He was reminded of the resigned look on black rain sufferers' faces when he launched a local victims' association in 2002.

"We are just waiting to die," one of the black rain victims said at the time.

Takato was encouraged by Muto's words calling for cooperation among victims of nuclear weapons and nuclear catastrophes.

Takato met with those who had been hurt by the use of nuclear technology at the World Nuclear Victims Forum in Hiroshima in November last year. The backgrounds of participants varied, from those who had suffered from nuclear tests, to sufferers of nuclear plant accidents and uranium mining.

"(The forum) reinforced my resolve to eliminate all nuclear technology from the Earth," Takato said.

In the A3-size, one-page newsletter, Takato included details of the Hiroshima case and voices from plaintiffs. He is one of the plaintiffs and also acts as the secretariat chief for a black rain victims' association that backs the plaintiffs. Even though he fell ill from overwork after the turn of this year, Takato continued to work on the publication.

The 4,000 copies of the newsletter will be sent out to peace organizations and supporters across Japan.

"I want to call for support from outside Hiroshima as well," Takato says.

Muto's acknowledgment of Takato's activities has given him hope to fight in a long battle to end Japan's history of neglecting victims of nuclear technology.

(This is the final installment of a five-part series)

UN new working group on nukes ban

February 23, 2016

UN launches working group on nuclear abolishment

http://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20160223_07/

The United Nations has launched a working group to discuss the possibility of a legal ban on nuclear weapons.

The proposal to establish the group was approved by the General Assembly in December of last year.

On Monday, the working group opened a 5-day meeting in Geneva, with representatives from more than 90 countries taking part. But all nuclear powers were absent.

At the beginning of the meeting, former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan expressed concern over what he calls a worsening situation.

Annan said that there has been little progress in nuclear disarmament since the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty went into effect more than 45 years ago.

He said that nuclear warheads have been deployed all over the world, and that nuclear powers have modernized their nuclear arsenals.

Annan added that he expects the new working group will make a breakthrough in discussions on reducing nuclear weapons.

Japan's disarmament ambassador Toshio Sano said that the abolishment of nuclear arms is a strong desire of the country, which is the only one to have suffered atomic bombings.

He said that efforts toward the goal will need involvement of nuclear powers to have real effect.

Toshiki Fujimori, a representative of an organization of atomic bombing survivors, also made an address.

Fujimori experienced the atomic bombing in Hiroshima at the age of one. He said that the suffering of Japanese survivors should not be experienced again by people in other countries.

The working group plans to hold 2 more meetings through August, and submit a report to the UN General Assembly in September.

10 officially recognised as A-bomb survivors

February 23, 2016

Court orders Nagasaki to recognize 10 people as A-bomb survivors

<http://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20160223/p2g/00m/0dm/002000c>

A lawyer holds a banner reading "partial lawsuit victory" outside the Nagasaki District Court in Nagasaki, on Feb. 22, 2016. (Mainichi)

NAGASAKI (Kyodo) -- The Nagasaki District Court accepted on Monday the claims of 10 plaintiffs seeking official recognition as atomic-bomb survivors eligible for special assistance.

- **【Related】** 10 newly recognized by Nagasaki court as official A-bomb survivors, others to appeal

The 10 individuals were among 161 plaintiffs who argued they experienced the wartime U.S. atomic bombing of the southwestern Japanese city on Aug. 9, 1945, within a 12-kilometer radius of ground zero. The plaintiffs are defined as individuals "who experienced the bombing," not hibakusha atomic-bomb survivors who are provided with health books and entitled to full compensation including medical assistance.

The plaintiffs failed to receive such recognition as they were outside the oval-shaped, state-designated zone stretching around 7 km from east to west and about 12 km from north to south.

The ruling is the first to order the issuance of health books for such people, according to the plaintiffs' lawyers.

In the suit, the plaintiffs sought that the prefectural and city governments issue the health books so they can receive assistance under the law for support for atomic-bomb survivors.

In the ruling, Presiding Judge Takayuki Matsubasa said, "People who were exposed to radiation stemming from the atomic bomb more than 10 times higher than that in the natural world could suffer damage to health."

The court examined estimated dosage figures submitted by the plaintiffs and determined that only the 10 plaintiffs can be recognized to have received the levels of radiation, the judge said.

The health ministry, meanwhile, said in a statement, "As we are examining the contents (of the ruling), we will decide how to respond by consulting with relevant ministries, and the Nagasaki prefectural and city governments."

The Nagasaki District Court rejected a suit by 395 other plaintiffs who filed a similar suit in 2012, prompting them to appeal to the Fukuoka High Court.

Official visit to Hiroshima Peace Park

February 24, 2016

Foreign ministers of G-7 nuclear powers lined up for Hiroshima peace park visit

http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/politics/AJ201602240066

THE ASAHI SHIMBUN

Foreign ministers of the three nuclear powers of the Group of Seven (G-7) leading industrialized economies are planning a visit in April to Hiroshima's Peace Memorial Park, government sources said.

The proposed visit to the park, created in memory of the 1945 atomic bombing on the city, would be the first by the foreign ministers of the United States, Britain and France.

The main theme of the G-7 foreign ministers' meeting is expected to be nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation.

"It is important to build momentum for moving toward a world without nuclear weapons," said Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida of the planned visit.

Kishida is a Lower House member representing a constituency in Hiroshima Prefecture. He expressed strong interest in urging the G-7 foreign ministers to visit the Peace Memorial Park during an inspection there last year.

The ministers are scheduled to gather in Hiroshima from April 10 to 11 prior to the Ise-Shima summit that Japan will host in Shima, Mie Prefecture, from May 26 to 27.

Kishida hopes the visit will be achieved in a “natural way.” Japanese officials are concerned that if they push too hard, it could backfire at a time when divisions are deepening between some nuclear powers and countries without such weapons.

Although the government also called on the U.S. president or other leaders of the G-7 nations to visit Hiroshima or Nagasaki, it will be unlikely to happen this time.

“The political hurdle is too high to clear in the United States,” said a senior Foreign Ministry official.

Canadian Foreign Minister Stephane Dion expressed his intention to tour the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum when he met with Kishida on Feb. 12.

Along with the museum, the park houses the Atomic Bomb Dome, which is a UNESCO World Heritage site, and the Cenotaph for the A-bomb Victims.

(This article was written by Ryutaro Abe and Hajimu Takeda.)

Govt needs to change attitude toward hibakusha

February 24, 2016

EDITORIAL: Government needs to drop its inflexible approach in recognizing ‘hibakusha’

<http://ajw.asahi.com/article/views/editorial/AJ201602240030>

The judiciary has challenged the government’s decades-long refusal to give “hibakusha” (A-bomb survivors) status to people who were outside the official “atomic-bombed areas” at the time of the 1945 nuclear attack on Nagasaki.

A group lawsuit was filed by 161 plaintiffs who experienced the atomic bombing in Nagasaki but have been denied government support as hibakusha because they were 7 to 12 kilometers from ground zero and outside the official “atomic-bombed areas.” The Nagasaki District Court on Feb. 22 recognized 10 of the plaintiffs as hibakusha.

When a system was set up in 1957 to provide official support to hibakusha, the central government designated atomic-bombed areas according to municipal boundaries of the time, and the areas were gradually expanded over time.

Although the Nagasaki court acknowledged only a small number of the plaintiffs as hibakusha, the ruling is of considerable significance.

The traditional system of sorting hibakusha and non-hibakusha just on the basis of whether they were inside or outside the demarcation lines was never reasonable. The government must revise this system to deal more flexibly with individual cases.

Theoretically, no initial radiation from the nuclear blast reached the locations where the plaintiffs were at the time of the bombing. But during the trial, much of the argument focused on the possibility that they suffered health damage from radioactive materials that were carried fairly long distances by dust and rain. The government always maintained that any exposure to radiation should be negligible outside the atomic-bombed areas. However, the Nagasaki court ruled that, in consideration of internal radiation exposure from breathing and ingesting contaminated food and drink, it was possible for people to have been exposed to high-level radiation even in some areas outside the officially designated areas.

The court effectively urged the government to step out of its inflexible mind-set.

And based on data concerning the 2011 accident at the Fukushima No. 1 nuclear power plant run by Tokyo Electric Power Co., the court indicated that 25 millisieverts--an equivalent of 10 years of exposure to radiation occurring in nature--as the level that causes health damage. However, it would be difficult to use that level as a new yardstick for determining who are hibakusha and who are not. Because World War II ended shortly after the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings, there is only a limited amount of research data available to estimate the levels of radiation the citizens of these cities were exposed to. And legally, the status of hibakusha is not determined by radiation doses. The reality of science today is that there are still many unknowns about the effects of nuclear bombs on the human body. Therefore, it is unreasonable of the government to refuse to acknowledge people as hibakusha unless they can present scientific proof. We think the realistic approach would be to still use the atomic-bombed areas as a basic criterion but acknowledge anyone as hibakusha--unless there is irrefutable proof to the contrary--even if they were outside the designated areas at the time of the blast. In Hiroshima, people who were exposed to radioactive "black rain" outside the designated areas went to court last autumn, demanding to be recognized as hibakusha. It is just too sad that survivors of the atomic bombings still have to fight the government 70 years after the war. Older plaintiffs are dying. There is no time left. The government must take urgent action to put the matter to rest.

US nuclear deterrence

February 28, 2016

Nuke chief: U.S. running out of time to begin updating nukes

<http://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20160228/p2g/00m/0in/013000c>



This Thursday, Feb. 25, 2016 photo provided by the U.S. Air Force shows an unarmed Minuteman 3 intercontinental ballistic missile launching from Vandenberg Air Force Base, Calif., during an operational test. (Staff Sgt. Jim Araos/U.S. Air Force via AP)

VANDENBERG AIR FORCE BASE, California (AP) -- The top U.S. nuclear war-fighting commander says time is running short to begin modernizing the decades-old U.S. nuclear forces.

Navy Adm. Cecil Haney and other Pentagon leaders contend the force is still in fighting shape -- "safe, reliable and effective" is the official mantra. But they also argue the time has come to begin modernizing the force or risk eroding its credibility as a deterrent to attack by others.

The debate in Congress over spending hundreds of billions of dollars to build and field a new generation of nuclear-capable bombers, submarines and land-based missiles is just beginning.

Critics say full-scale modernization is neither affordable nor necessary.

The debate is influenced not only by the perceived need to fully replace aging weapons but also by worries about North Korea's nuclear ambitions and concern over what Defense Secretary Ash Carter calls Russia's "nuclear saber-rattling."

Robert Work, the deputy secretary of defense, said the Pentagon will need an estimated \$18 billion a year between 2021 and 2035 to modernize the three "legs" of the U.S. nuclear triad -- weapons capable of being launched from land, sea and air.

"We need to replace these," Work said. "We can't delay this anymore."

The enormous sums needed are at risk of getting squeezed by high-priority requirements for non-nuclear, conventional weapons. And Work's numbers don't include the billions that would be needed to modernize the nuclear warheads on the business end of missiles and bombs.

"Modernization now is not an option" -- it must happen, Haney, the commander of U.S. Strategic Command, said in an interview on Friday, just hours after watching a test launch of an unarmed Minuteman 3 intercontinental ballistic missile, or ICBM. The Minuteman, which has been on constant 24-hour alert since 1970, has long surpassed its 10-year life expectancy.

Haney said the U.S. stockpile of nuclear warheads is the oldest it has ever been. As head of Strategic Command he is the military's top nuclear war-fighter.

"We have to realize we can't extend things forever," Haney said, noting that the Navy is planning to replace its aging Ohio-class ballistic nuclear missile submarines, while the Air Force intends to build a new nuclear-capable bomber to replace the B-52.

Work said that although the Pentagon is closely monitoring Russia's nuclear modernization, which includes development of new versions of its ICBMs, those moves are not driving U.S. decisions about how quickly and broadly it should modernize its nuclear forces.

Some private analysts, however, see the U.S. and Russia entering a new arms competition.

"It's disturbing how quickly both the United States and Russia are sliding back toward the Cold War, both rhetorically and operationally," said Stephen Schwartz, an independent nuclear policy analyst and author.

"Worse still, both the United States and Russia are now using each other's nuclear programs and military activities to justify and rationalize their own," he added.

Haney and Work both were present Thursday night for the Minuteman 3 test launch, which was the second such test of the year. Work said Friday that the test was successful, with the missile's payload landing within a targeted area of water near Kwajalein Atoll in the south Pacific. He said it was the eighth consecutive successful Minuteman test launch, which would mean the last unsuccessful test was in December 2013, according to a chronology provided by the Air Force.

London: Thousands rally against nuclear weapons

February 27, 2016

Trident rally is Britain's biggest anti-nuclear march in a generation

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/feb/27/cnd-rally-anti-nuclear-demonstration-trident-london>

Mark Townsend

Saturday 27 February 2016 18.11 GMT Last modified on Saturday 27 February 2016 18.47 GMT

Thousands of protesters have assembled in central London for Britain's biggest anti-nuclear weapons rally in a generation.

Campaigners gathered from across the world: some said they had travelled from Australia to protest against the renewal of Trident. Others had come from the west coast of Scotland, where Britain's nuclear deterrent submarines are based.

As the huge column of people began moving from Marble Arch after 1pm, the mood was buoyant and spirited despite the cold.

Naomi Young, 34, from Southampton said: "You can't use nuclear weapons. You would destroy the environment and kill hundreds of thousands of people. Why spend £100bn to buy a weapon unless you want to destroy the earth?"

Many waved placards with phrases including "Books Not Bombs", "Cut War Not Welfare" and "NHS Not Trident".

A common theme among protesters was the cost of renewing Trident during a period of austerity.

Andy Pomphrey, 67, from Hampshire, said: "It's such an excessive amount of money for a weapons system when the NHS and junior doctors, are struggling."

Kai Carrwright, 17, from Exeter said: "We are having to pay to go to university and yet they want to spend £100bn on something that can only lead to the destruction of life on Earth."

The campaigners headed for Trafalgar Square where were addressed by the leaders of the SNP, Plaid Cymru and the Green party. The true draw – cited as an inspiration by many of those assembled – was the leader of the Labour party, Jeremy Corbyn, whose unswerving unilateralist stance has electrified the nuclear deterrent debate in a manner few could have foreseen.

As crowds built from midday close to the assembly point at Marble Arch, it quickly became evident that the event would mark the biggest anti-nuclear demonstration since 1983, when 300,000 gathered in London's Hyde Park to demonstrate against the deployment of Cruise missiles at Greenham Common, Berkshire. Union officials, faith leaders, anti-nuclear activists and anti-war campaigners were evident. Stewards estimated the numbers ran into "many tens of thousands".

Organisers of the march, the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, were confident the turnout would send a robust message of growing support against renewing the nuclear weapons system – at an estimated cost of least £41bn – and argued that worries about job losses were a red herring.

Corbyn's decision to address the rally later on Saturday has further exposed a faultline through the party, and he has been criticised by some for highlighting party splits on a key debate.

Entering the stage to rapturous applause, he said that no one should forget the "absolute mass destruction on both sides" that would follow a nuclear attack and reiterated his "total horror of nuclear weapons, should they ever be used by anybody".

Corbyn said he was elected Labour leader on a manifesto in which standing against the renewal of Trident was a key component.

He acknowledged the party's role in the 1968 nuclear non-proliferation treaty and urged: "I want to see a Labour government that would adhere to all the articles of the non-proliferation treaty."

The treaty had worked, given that most countries that did not have nuclear weapons at that time had not subsequently acquired them, Corbyn told the crowd. It was a credit to countries such as Argentina, South Africa and Brazil that both Africa and South America remained free of such weapons, he added.

The US, Russia and the UK signed the treaty, pledging their cooperation in stemming the spread of nuclear technology.

Corbyn, who said he joined the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament when he was 16, also made reference to those who questioned whether he should be attending the protest: "A lot of people said that maybe it was utterly relevant maybe you shouldn't be there, but I want to be here because of my belief in a nuclear-free future."

He said he chose to address the demonstration because he believed in a "different kind of politics in a different kind of world, a world that emphasises dealing with the crying needs of the poor and homeless in this country. Those that are going short and suffering public spending cuts."

Earlier this week, union activists from the GMB attacked Corbyn over his stance on Trident, warning that tens of thousands of skilled jobs were dependent on parliamentary backing for renewal of the nuclear submarine programme.

He advocated re-investing some of the money allocated for Trident on keeping jobs in the affected areas. Actor Vanessa Redgrave, Rou Reynolds of rock band Enter Shikari, and comedian Francesca Martinez also addressed the rally. Other high-profile speakers include writer and priest Giles Fraser, and the writer Tariq Ali.

The rally received support from a number of cultural figures including bands Young Fathers and Massive Attack. Fashion designer Katharine Hamnett recently unveiled a new Stop Trident T-shirt range while Portishead's Geoff Barrow is currently mixing a single in support of the campaign.

The event also received significant international support with campaigners from Japan, the only country to have suffered an attack by an atomic bomb, urging Britain to work towards disarmament.

Gensuikyo, the Japan Council against A and H Bombs, joined similar organisations from France, Switzerland, Italy, New Zealand and the US in sending messages of support and solidarity to the CND, the organisers of Saturday's demonstration.

The Successor programme to replace the four Vanguard nuclear armed submarines currently carrying Trident missiles is now priced at £31bn, with a further £10bn set aside for unforeseen risks.

A parliamentary vote on renewing Trident is expected later in the year.

March against nukes (weapons and plants)

March 2, 2016

Thousands demand nuclear-free world on 62nd anniversary of U.S. H-bomb test

http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/social_affairs/AJ201603020045

THE ASAHI SHIMBUN

YAIZU, Shizuoka Prefecture--Around 2,000 people demanded the abolition of nuclear weapons and nuclear power plants here on March 1--the 62nd anniversary of an ill-fated U.S. hydrogen bomb test in the Pacific.

In 1954, the hydrogen bomb exploded at Bikini Atoll in the Marshall Islands, showering crew members of the tuna fishing boat Daigo Fukuryu Maru with deadly radioactive fallout. It was operating in waters about 160 kilometers from the blast.

Setsuko Shimomoto, the 65-year-old eldest daughter of Tobei Oguro, a former crew member of a fishing boat sailing near the Daigo Fukuryu Maru that day, gave a speech at the "3.1 Bikini Day" rally.

Referring to the nuclear accident at the Fukushima No. 1 nuclear power plant in 2011, she said, "When I heard the central government announcing that, 'there will be no immediate effect (on human health),' I thought I heard the same words in the wake of the Bikini incident."

"The Bikini incident is not just 'the past.' I applied to the (Japan Health Insurance Association) in order to convey the horrors of the suffering that radiation has caused."

Her father, Oguro, died of bile duct cancer at the age of 78 in 2002.

Shimomoto, from Kochi, said she and others, including former crew members, applied to the health association Feb. 26, demanding that they be covered by seamen's insurance.

Tony Debrum, the former foreign minister of the Marshall Islands, said he had called on nations with nuclear weapons to abide by the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty and filed suit against these nations with the International Court of Justice.

Organized by the executive committee of the World Conference against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs and other groups, the gathering was held at the Cultural Center in Yaizu.

Beforehand, about 1,500 people marched along a 2-kilometer route from JR Yaizu Station to Kotokuin temple in Yaizu to the grave of Aikichi Kuboyama, the chief radio operator on the Daigo Fukuryu Maru, who died at age 40 from radiation exposure soon after the incident.

For a nuclear-free world

March 2, 2016

http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/social_affairs/AJ201603020045

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Plutonium to be returned to US

March 18, 2016

Japan to return 331 kg of plutonium as U.S. official warns of proliferation risk

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2016/03/18/national/japan-return-331-kg-plutonium-u-s-official-warns-proliferation-risk/#.Vuvr0OaDmov>

Staff Writer

OSAKA – A large shipment of plutonium is expected to depart Japan soon amid a warning from a senior American official saying nuclear reprocessing in East Asia could lead to increased amounts of nuclear material that could be used for nuclear weapons.

By late Sunday, two armed British transport ships currently docked in Kobe, the Pacific Egret and the Pacific Heron, are to be dispatched to the Japan Atomic Energy Agency's port in the village of Tokai, Ibaraki Prefecture, according to Greenpeace, which is monitoring the ships.

The vessels will pick up 331 kg (729 pounds) of plutonium that was sent to Japan by the United States for civil research years ago but can also be used for nuclear weapons. The material will be returned to the U.S. Department of Energy's Savannah River Site in South Carolina in a trip expected to take about two months.

The initiation of the plutonium's return comes less than two weeks before the March 31 to April 1 Nuclear Security Summit in Washington, D.C., which Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and U.S. President Barack Obama are expected to attend.

In 2014, Abe and Obama agreed that Japan would return plutonium which was sent to Japan in the Cold War era for research purposes.

In particular, the material was used for research into the country's failed fast-breeder reactor program at Monju in Fukui Prefecture, which aimed to produce more plutonium from spent nuclear fuel than it consumed.

In addition, Japan is still officially pursuing reprocessing at a facility in Rokkasho, Aomori Prefecture, which extracts plutonium from spent conventional nuclear reactor fuel. The Rokkasho reprocessing plant is decades behind schedule and way over budget, costing over ¥2 trillion by unofficial estimates, due to technological problems. Last November, its start was postponed for the 23rd time, until 2018.

On Thursday, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Thomas Countryman told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that the reprocessing of spent nuclear fuel had little, if any, economic justification and creates international nuclear security concerns in a region where tensions are escalating.

"I would be happy to see all countries get out of the plutonium reprocessing business," Countryman told the Senate committee.

"If 331 kilograms of plutonium warrants removal from Japan on the grounds of its vulnerability and in the interests of securing nuclear weapons material, then there is no credible justification for Japan's current program and future plans to increase its plutonium stockpiling," Shaun Burnie, senior nuclear specialist at Greenpeace Germany, said in a press statement.

As of early 2015, the total amount of separated plutonium managed within and outside of Japan was about 47.8 tons. Approximately 10.8 tons was held domestically and about 37 tons was held abroad, according to the Japan Atomic Energy Commission.

Plutonium back to US aboard British ships

March 21, 2016

2 British ships arrive in Japan to carry plutonium to U.S.

<http://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20160321/p2g/00m/0dm/060000c>

TOKYO (AP) -- Two British ships arrived in eastern Japan on Monday to transport a shipment of plutonium -- enough to make dozens of atomic bombs -- to the U.S. for storage under a bilateral agreement.

The ships arrived at the coastal village of Tokai, northeast of Tokyo, home to the country's main nuclear research facility, the Japan Atomic and Energy Agency, according to the Kyodo News agency and citizens' groups. It will take several hours to load the plutonium-filled casks onto the ships, both fitted with naval guns and other protection.

The Pacific Egret and Pacific Heron, both operated by Pacific Nuclear Transport Ltd., will take the 331 kilograms (730 pounds) of plutonium to the Savannah River Site, a U.S. government facility in South Carolina, under a pledge made by Japan in 2014. The plutonium, mostly from Britain, and some from the U.S. and France, had been used for research purposes.

The Pacific Egret docked first and appeared to be loading the plutonium, with the second ship standing by off-shore, according to media reports and Japanese and international anti-nuclear groups.

Japanese officials refused to confirm details, citing security reasons.

Japan's stockpile and its fuel-reprocessing ambitions to use plutonium as fuel for power generation have been a source of international security concerns.

Japan has accumulated a massive stockpile of plutonium -- 11 metric tons in Japan and another 36 tons that have been reprocessed in Britain and France and are waiting to be returned to Japan -- enough to make nearly 6,000 atomic bombs.

The latest shipment comes just ahead of a nuclear security summit in Washington later this month, and is seen as a step to showcase both countries' nuclear nonproliferation efforts.

Washington has increasingly voiced concerns about the nuclear spent-fuel-reprocessing plans by Japan and China to produce plutonium for energy generation, a technology South Korea also wants to acquire, saying they pose security and proliferation risks.

The U.S. environmental group Savannah River Site Watch said it recognized the need to secure plutonium, but asked why plutonium of foreign origins had to be brought onto American soil for storage.

In a statement Monday, group director Tom Clemens also urged Washington to "reassess its position at the summit and push hard for Japan to cease reprocessing and plutonium stockpiling due to the proliferation threat those programs pose."

Japan began building a major reprocessing plant with French state-owned company Areva in the early 1990s. The trouble-plagued project has been delayed ever since, and in November its opening was postponed until 2018 to allow for more safety upgrades and inspections.

Experts say launching the Rokkasho reprocessing plant would not ease the situation, because Japan has little hope of achieving a spent fuel recycling program.

Japan's plutonium-burning fast breeder reactor Monju, suspended for more than 20 years, is now on the verge of being closed due to poor safety records and technical problems, while optional plans to burn uranium-plutonium mixtures of MOX fuel in conventional reactors have been delayed since the Fukushima crisis. Only two of Japan's 43 workable reactors are currently online.

Japan: What message on nuclear weapons?

March 22, 2016

Editorial: Japan must send powerful message on nuclear disarmament from Hiroshima

<http://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20160322/p2a/00m/0na/020000c>

As tensions between nuclear-weapon states and non-nuclear-weapon states intensify, the responsibility of Japan to serve as a bridge between the two parties has grown even greater.

Ahead of the Ise-Shima G7 Summit set to take place in May, Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida and U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry will take part in a foreign ministerial meeting in Hiroshima on April 10 and 11 with their G7 counterparts.

Japan should lead the debate on the elimination of nuclear weapons and send a strong message from Hiroshima, which was devastated by an atomic bomb dropped by the U.S. military in World War II. Seven years have passed since U.S. President Barack Obama's speech for "a world without nuclear weapons."

And yet, approximately 16,000 nuclear weapons still exist worldwide. Nuclear disarmament has plateaued, while the proliferation of nuclear weapons remains a serious concern. The Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) framework, which permits only five nuclear states -- the U.S., Russia, the U.K., France and China -- to possess nuclear arms in return for nuclear arms reduction, has become a mere facade. Meanwhile, to break through the stagnation of the NPT framework, a push to highlight the inhumaneness of nuclear weapons in order to ban their development, testing, production and use, and establish a nuclear disarmament treaty that would obligate nuclear states to dispose of their nuclear arms, is gaining momentum.

The meeting in Geneva, Switzerland, in late February of an open-ended U.N. working group tasked to discuss legal measures necessary to achieve a nuclear-weapons-free world took place in response to such moves. The working group will meet in May and August as well, and will submit recommendations and a report to the U.N. General Assembly this fall.

However, the five nuclear-weapon states -- which remain wary of an outright ban on nuclear weapons -- opposed the resolution to establish the working group at the U.N. General Assembly in December 2015, and are not taking part in the group. Japan, which lies under the "nuclear umbrella" of the U.S., abstained from voting on the resolution, and decided only at the last minute to participate in the working group. Japan is calling for a nuclear-weapons-free world as the only country to have experienced nuclear bombing, and yet it still upholds a national security policy that relies on American nuclear deterrence. Because of this, Japan takes the position that an outright ban on nuclear weapons should not be forced without the cooperation of nuclear-weapon states, realistic and practical measures, and consideration for the global security landscape. Japan, stuck between the ideal of a world without nuclear weapons and serious national security challenges, has been criticized for its confusing actions and double standards. The only thing Japan can do now is to take and build upon realistic steps.

At the meeting of the working group last month, Japan, under the initiative of Australia, released a joint statement addressing the deliberation of a long-term treaty banning nuclear weapons. The statement put forth the possibility of considering a treaty completely banning nuclear weapons after reducing nuclear weapons to the smallest number possible, and with a variety of prerequisites, including the establishment of a verification system.

That's a proposal for which nuclear-weapon states can surely make compromises, is it not?

The statement was signed by four G7 members: Japan, Germany, Canada and Italy. We hope that the understanding and approval of the U.S., the U.K, and France can be obtained, and that Japan will be able to denounce the inhumaneness of nuclear weapons and discuss the prospect of an all-out ban on such weapons at the upcoming foreign ministerial conference in Hiroshima.

So pure it could easily be turned into bombs

March 21, 2016

Japan ships plutonium to the US

http://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20160322_30/

A ship transporting plutonium from Japan to the United States has started its journey. The transfer is **part of counter-terrorism measures aimed at preventing the material from falling into the wrong hands.**

The vessel left a port in Ibaraki Prefecture, eastern Japan, at about 3 PM on Tuesday.

It will deliver 331 kilograms of highly pure plutonium to the US, where it will be processed. The amount is said to be enough to make 40 atomic bombs.

The Japanese government has not disclosed the means of transport or routes, citing security concerns. But sources said an armed ship flying British flags arrived at a port in the prefecture on Monday, and started loading the shipment on Tuesday morning.

The transfer is part of the counterterrorism measures planned by Japanese and US leaders at a 2014 nuclear security summit in the Netherlands.

Japan originally purchased the plutonium from some Western countries in the 1970s. It was used at a nuclear research facility in Ibaraki Prefecture. Experts say **the purity of the plutonium is so high that it could easily be used in nuclear weapons.** The material will be processed at a facility in the US to prevent such use.

Other than the shipment, Japan has 47 tons of plutonium, both in and outside the country. It was created by reprocessing spent fuel from nuclear power plants.

Japan had plans to use the stockpile in a fast-breeder reactor that burns plutonium. But the reactor is still under development and is not likely to go into use in the near future.

Nuclear Security summit in Washington D.C.

Nuclear summit to take up anti-terrorism measures

http://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20160326_13/

White House officials say world leaders will discuss measures to fight terrorism at a special meeting of the Nuclear Security Summit in Washington next week.

Leaders from more than 50 countries, including US President Barack Obama and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, are scheduled to attend the 2-day summit that opens on Thursday. The agenda will include ways to prevent terrorists from obtaining nuclear materials.

The White House officials say the special meeting is being planned following the terrorist attacks in Belgium.

They say the leaders will exchange views on the threat of the Islamic State militant group and other

organizations targeting urban areas to enhance their preparedness against terrorism.

On the sidelines of the summit, President Obama, Prime Minister Abe and South Korean President Park Geun-hye are scheduled to hold a 3-way summit.

Obama will also meet with Chinese President Xi Jinping.

They are expected to discuss recent provocative actions by North Korea, including a nuclear test and ballistic missile launches.

Japan and its plutonium

March 22, 2016

Global worries about plutonium in Japan

http://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20160322_32/

Materials that can be used to make nuclear weapons, such as plutonium and highly-enriched uranium, are controlled by international regulations.

That's to prevent them from being used for military purposes by countries other than the 5 nations that are allowed to possess such weapons under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

The 2001 attacks in the United States raised concerns about nuclear materials falling into the hands of terrorists. The international community has been taking steps to tighten nuclear security.

As part of counterterrorism measures, the US proposed that nuclear materials produced by power generation around the world should be collected.

Japan agreed to transfer plutonium to the US at the 2014 nuclear security summit in the Netherlands. The US praised the decision, saying this would increase the level of Japan's nuclear security, which is said to be weak.

Japan currently has 47 tons of plutonium produced by reprocessing spent fuel. The amount is said to be enough to produce nearly 6,000 atomic bombs.

It also accounts for about 17 percent of the 271 tons of worldwide stocks of civilian-use plutonium from reprocessed fuel. Japan's amount is the 4th largest, after Britain, France and Russia.

The international community is critical of Japan, saying the country had promised not to possess more plutonium than necessary.

Japan's stock is expected to rise further, as a fast-breeder reactor that burns plutonium is still under development, and is unlikely to go into use in the near future.

An additional 8 tons a year would be produced after the reprocessing plant now under construction in Rokkasho Village in the northern prefecture of Aomori goes into full operation.

Kishida to push for "a world free of nuclear arms"

Kishida to urge world to give up nuclear weapons at G-7 meeting

March 31, 2016

http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/politics/AJ201603310048

THE ASAHI SHIMBUN

Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida said he will press the Group of Seven meeting he will chair next month to adopt a "Hiroshima Declaration" pledging to get rid the world of nuclear weapons.

Kishida announced his plan March 30 in an interview ahead of the G-7 foreign ministers' meeting to be held in Hiroshima for the first time.

Kishida, a lawmaker who represents a Hiroshima Prefecture electoral district, believes the meeting's location carries great significance as it was the first of only two cities to be devastated by U.S. atomic bombing in 1945.

The United States, Britain and France, all nuclear powers, will be represented at the April 10-11 meeting. Global interest in achieving a nuclear-free world took off after U.S. President Barack Obama made the proposal in Prague in 2009. But the momentum "has currently withered," Kishida said.

Referring to North Korea's repeated nuclear weapons tests and launches of ballistic missiles, he said: "They are a challenge to the nonproliferation regime."

"It's exactly because we are in such times that we want to emit a clear and powerful message from a city once struck by the atomic bomb to restart disarmament and nonproliferation efforts," Kishida said.

Activist groups comprising those affected by the atomic bombing of the city are currently urging the G-7 foreign ministers to visit the Cenotaph for the A-bomb Victims and the Peace Memorial Park, site of the Hiroshima museum.

Kishida only said talks are still under way with the three nuclear powers with regard to this issue.

"(Their visits) will be highly significant in boosting the movement to push for a world free of nuclear arms," Kishida said.

(This article was written by Hajimu Takeda and Ryutaro Abe.)

Bridging the gap between US and Japanese "narratives"

March 28, 2016

By researching A-bombs' impact in Japan, Los Alamos team hopes to bridge gaps between narratives

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2016/03/28/national/history/researching-bombs-impact-japan-los-alamos-team-hopes-bridge-gaps-narratives/#.Vvl3IXpdeot>

AP

SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO – A group from Los Alamos, once the building site for an atomic bomb, is making an unprecedented trip this month to a country that was devastated by the weapon.

Los Alamos Historical Museum representatives are traveling throughout Japan **to gain that country's perspective on the impact of nuclear warfare for a planned exhibit**. Museum director Judith Stauber, along with a museum registrar and a student intern, flew to Japan Thursday. The team will visit Tokyo, Kyoto and the two cities that were targeted with the bomb — Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

They will meet with a bomb survivor, researchers and leaders from the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum and the Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum, Stauber said.

The trip has been in the works for two years. It is partially funded by a \$10,000 grant from the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the Santa Fe New Mexican reported. It also has gotten support from the New Mexico Japanese Citizens League.

The planned exhibit will open in December. Aside from visiting Japan, Stauber plans to collaborate with Japanese-Americans on a display on World War II internment camps in New Mexico.

Los Alamos, known as Atomic City, is home to the Los Alamos National Laboratory. The community is considered one of the wealthiest in the U.S. because of an economy tethered to one of the nation's largest science laboratories. It's a city where colorful symbols of atomic energy are displayed almost everywhere. Bo Jacobs, a researcher at the Hiroshima Peace Institute who will meet with Stauber, said the history surrounding atomic energy is not a story of scientific discovery in Japan. Instead, it's a story of "people who were killed, who lost family members, who were injured." In an email, Jacobs said the bomb's invention took a human toll of anywhere from 129,000 to more than 200,000.

"The differences between the U.S. and the Japanese narratives of the attack — they couldn't be more different," Jacobs said.

Stauber said **she hopes this visit will help build an exhibit that can bridge that gap between narratives.**

"What do we know, and how do we know it?" she said. "And how are we remembering?"

Momentum lost

Obama's last atomic summit finds nuclear fears high, momentum against proliferation low

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2016/03/31/world/politics-diplomacy-world/obamas-last-atomic-summit-finds-nuclear-fears-high-momentum-proliferation-low/#.Vv0kEnpdeot>

Reuters

March 31, 2016

WASHINGTON – Just as fears of nuclear terrorism are rising, U.S. President Barack Obama’s drive to lock down vulnerable atomic materials worldwide seems to have lost momentum and could slow further. With less than 10 months left in office to follow through on one of his signature foreign policy initiatives, Obama will convene leaders from more than 50 countries in Washington this week for his fourth and final Nuclear Security Summit, a high-level diplomatic process that started and will end on his watch. A boycott by Russian President Vladimir Putin, apparently unwilling to join in a U.S.-dominated gathering at a time of increased tensions between Washington and Moscow, adds to doubts that the meeting will yield major results.

The recent deadly militant attacks in Brussels have fueled concern that Islamic State could eventually target nuclear plants and develop radioactive “dirty bombs,” a topic that may well be uppermost in leaders’ minds as they meet.

Despite significant progress by Obama in persuading dozens of countries to rid themselves of bomb-making materials or reduce and safeguard stockpiles, much of the world’s plutonium and enriched uranium remains vulnerable to theft.

The absence of Russia, one of the biggest atomic powers, could detract from decisions reached in Washington this week.

Obama, in an opinion piece in *The Washington Post*, said: “Our massive Cold War nuclear arsenal is poorly suited to today’s threats. The United States and Russia — which together hold more than 90 percent of the world’s nuclear weapons — should negotiate to reduce our stockpiles further.”

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said on Wednesday Russia was skipping the summit because of a “shortage of mutual cooperation” in working out the agenda.

While noting that Moscow had continued joint work on nuclear security, White House spokesman Josh Earnest said Russia was going to “miss out on an opportunity” and that its no-show illustrated the “degree to which Russia is isolated.” Russia has chafed over U.S.-led sanctions over the Ukraine conflict.

Efforts to make the world safer have also been complicated by North Korea’s nuclear weapons advance and Pakistan’s move toward smaller, tactical nuclear weapons, which Washington fears may further destabilize an already volatile region.

All of this weighs on Obama’s agenda as he prepares to host world leaders on Thursday and Friday. He inaugurated the event nearly six years ago, after using a landmark speech in Prague in 2009 to lay out the goal of ridding the world of nuclear weapons as a central theme of his presidency.

There is no guarantee that once Obama, the driving force behind the initiative, leaves office in January his successor will keep the issue a high priority.

The White House previewed the summit by touting a list of achievements in the U.S.-led effort to tie down loose bomb-grade materials, and arms control advocates commend Obama for galvanizing an international response to the problem.

However, many say progress has slowed since the last summit in 2014 and countries such as Japan, India and Pakistan are preparing activities that could increase stockpiles of nuclear materials.

“The Nuclear Security Summits have had a positive effect, but the strategic goal of developing an effective global nuclear security system remains unachieved,” the Nuclear Threat Initiative, an anti-proliferation watchdog, said in a report in March.

According to the group’s Nuclear Security Index, which tracks the safety of weapons-usable nuclear materials, the past two years have brought no improvement in a range of measures, including on-site physical protection, security during transport and the ability to recover lost radioactive materials.

The report also said many countries' nuclear reactors were vulnerable to online attacks. Seven of 24 countries with weapons-grade material, including China and Belgium, received the lowest possible score for their facilities' cybersecurity.

Other critics point to a lack of an agreed-upon set of international standards for nuclear security or a mechanism for keeping tabs on common sources of radioactive material often found in hospitals and medical labs.

However, Laura Holgate, Obama's adviser on weapons of mass destruction, cited commitments from 30 countries at the 2014 summit to secure their most dangerous material.

"The international community has made it harder than ever for terrorists to acquire nuclear weapons, and that has made us all more secure," she told reporters before the summit.

Two of the Brussels suicide bombers secretly filmed the daily routine of the head of Belgium's nuclear research and development program and considered an attack on a nuclear site in the country, according to Belgian media.

U.S. experts are less concerned about militants obtaining nuclear weapon components than about thefts of ingredients for a low-tech dirty bomb that would use conventional explosives to disperse radioactive material and sow panic.

U.S. officials said they had no doubt that Islamic State, which controls swaths of Syria and Iraq, was interested in obtaining such materials, but Holgate said U.S. authorities had no "explicit indications" that the group had tried to do so.

More commitments from world leaders to enhance nuclear security are expected at the summit but anti-proliferation groups worry that without further meetings at the highest levels, interest could wane and improvements could backslide.

Nuclear Security Summit without nuclear?

March 31, 2016

How can a "Nuclear Security Summit" NOT include nuclear weapons and nuclear power?!

<http://www.beyondnuclear.org/nuclear-weapons/2016/3/30/how-can-a-nuclear-security-summit-not-include-nuclear-weapon.html>

"Not in my lifetime"? When, then?! President Obama's final, so-called "Nuclear Security Summit" will take place in Washington, D.C. on March 31st and April 1st. But the entire focus for the 50 heads of state in attendance will be on locking down weapons-usable nuclear materials, namely separated Plutonium-239 and highly enriched Uranium-235 (HEU).

As an IPS article reports, this is nothing new. In fact, the Nuclear Security Summits have not even done a very good job of covering even this narrow focus. Dr. M.V. Ramana, a Beyond Nuclear advisory board member, is reported as saying:

To start with, he said, all the Security summits have been very narrowly focused on just civilian HEU (Highly Enriched Uranium). Occasionally there is some talk about plutonium, but this is more the exception than the rule.

President Obama has just published a Nuclear Security Summit-related op-ed in the Washington Post, which raises more perplexing questions than it answers.

The New York Times has also reported on the global status of nuclear weapons-usable material risks, in light of the current Nuclear Security Summit. One remarkable passage quotes a U.S. Department of Energy official admitting he drank vodka during the shipment of weapons-usable highly enriched uranium out of Ukraine! (Non-proliferating under the influence?!!)

In his famous Prague speech of spring 2009, President Obama infamously declared that nuclear weapons abolition would not happen in his lifetime. (The phrase was used in the title of a documentary film which critically examines the risks of the Atomic Age, and what people can do, and are doing, about it.)

And now, Obama hasn't even put nuclear weapons abolition on the agenda for this final Nuclear Security Summit of his presidency. This, even though the United States -- the only country to ever use nuclear weapons against cities (Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan in August 1945) -- committed to abolish its nuclear weapons arsenal, in good faith, by signing the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, four long decades ago.

In an attempt to return nuclear weapons abolition to the world leaders' radar screen, Global Zero has called for a street protest and rally outside the Nuclear Security Summit on April 1st, featuring an inflatable mock nuclear missile.

On March 28th (the 37th anniversary of the Three Mile Island meltdown), Beyond Nuclear joined more than 175 groups from Japan, the U.S., and other countries in sending a letter to Japanese Prime Minister Abe. The groups called on Abe to reconsider plans to reprocess high-level radioactive waste at Rokkasho. Japan would be the only country without a nuclear weapons arsenal to reprocess high-level radioactive waste -- an activity that could give Japan enough separated plutonium to manufacture countless nuclear weapons. Japan has the technological prowess (including advanced missile technology) that -- with the necessary ingredient, separated plutonium -- it could manufacture a large arsenal of deliverable nuclear weapons in a very short period of time.

Japan's "peace constitution" currently forbids any such thing. But elements of the right wing in Japan have long supported keeping the nuclear weapons option open.

Prominent signatories of the letter to Abe include Hibakusha groups, survivors (and their descendants) of the United States' atomic bombings of Japan. (These groups have unanimously called for the abolition of not only nuclear weapons, but also nuclear power, in the aftermath of the Fukushima catastrophe.)

Japan's policy to separate weapons-usable plutonium from high-level radioactive waste risks nuclear weapons proliferation not only at home, but in other countries, such as South Korea. Other countries could respond in kind to Japan's provocative precedent. Japan's reprocessing policy risks increasing the volatility of its already tense East Pacific neighborhood (including nuclear armed China and North Korea), not to mention other international hot spots.

As Tom Clements has warned at the SRS Watch website, a "*Nuclear Security Summit Effect*" seems to be under way. The Obama administration appears to be moving nuclear materials, from numerous countries overseas, to Savannah River Site (SRS), South Carolina so that it can claim non-proliferation victories. But the materials are coming from relatively secure places, and could be much better secured right where they originated. Instead, the shipments -- by road, rail, and/or waterway -- are increasing the risks of accidental, or intentional (as in terrorist attacks), catastrophic releases of hazardous radioactivity, or diversion/theft of nuclear weapons-usable materials while in transit.

As Clements has documented at the SRS Watch website, *"Nuclear Security Summit Effect" shipments to SRS* include:

- *Canadian liquid high-level [radioactive] waste to SRS: Why has DOE staunchly refused to analyze the viable option of denaturing the HEU [highly enriched uranium] contents in Canada?*
- *German graphite spent fuel to SRS: Why proceed with the import plans of the AVR & THTR gas-cooled reactor spent fuel when the NNSA [U.S. Department of Energy National Nuclear Security Administration] has determined that there is no proliferation risk of it staying in Germany?*
- *Swiss plutonium - 20 kg - to SRS: Why was this non-U.S.-origin material imported when it was of low risk for nuclear weapons and should have stayed in Switzerland or gone to the massive plutonium stockpiles in France or the UK?*
- *Import of 331 kilograms of plutonium from Japan to SRS: What will be said at the summit about the stockpile of 10.8 MT [Metric Tons] of weapon-usable plutonium in Japan, efforts to stockpile more plutonium by operating the Rokkasho reprocessing plant and why 231 kg of UK-origin plutonium is being dumped on SRS?*

As reported by AP, the Japanese weapons-usable plutonium shipment, still en route by ship on the high seas, has led to the Republican Governor of South Carolina, Nikki Haley, calling on the Energy Secretary, Ernest Moniz, to divert or "return to sender" the shipment.

Unfortunately, however, Gov. Haley's statement comes in the context of the Republican leadership of South Carolina -- including both U.S. Senators, Lindsey Graham and Tim Scott -- calling for continued billion dollar boondoggle taxpayer funding for the white elephant known as the Mox Fuel Fabrication Facility (MFFF) at SRS.

(And Sen. Graham is responsible for South Carolina "dumping on itself." He did the dirty work for DOE in 2004 -- allowing high-level radioactive waste sludges to be abandoned in underground storage tanks at SRS. In 200 years or so, so much Strontium-90 will leak from the corroded tanks and failing grout, that the Savannah River will be unfit to drink, per Safe Drinking Water Act limits on Sr-90 concentration.)

Mox is short for Mixed Oxide (Uranium-Plutonium) nuclear fuel. The MFFF would convert *many tons* of excess U.S. weapons-usable plutonium into Mox nuclear fuel for commercial atomic reactor use. But the MFFF is billions of dollars over budget, and years behind schedule, with no end in sight. In fact, the MFFF construction may be fatally flawed. To its credit, the Obama administration is trying to zero out MFFF funding, to cut losses to the taxpayer. But the South Carolina Republicans are fiercely resisting the MFFF's inevitable demise.

The alternative for weapons-usable plutonium disposition? What anti-nuclear activists advocated 20 years ago: mix the separated plutonium back into the high-level radioactive waste from which it came in the first place, and treat it as what it is, ultra-hazardous high-level radioactive waste, requiring deep geologic disposal.

Nuclear power is also conspicuous by its absence from Obama's Nuclear Security Summit. Revelations from Belgium about the potentially catastrophic terrorist threats to commercial atomic reactors, is just the latest example of nuclear power's inherent security risks. They are ignored at everyone's great peril.

Update on March 31, 2016 by admin

Thom Hartmann hosted Beyond Nuclear's Kevin Kamps on his television program *The Big Picture*. On Thom's "The Best of the Rest of the News" (from the 44 minutes 45 seconds mark to the 52 minutes 08 seconds mark), Thom asks Kevin "Is Obama's Nuke Summit a Sham?"

Update on March 31, 2016 by admin

Abe's vision of Article 9

Abe Cabinet says Article 9 does not ban possessing, using N-weapons

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201604020026.html>

THE ASAHI SHIMBUN

April 2, 2016 at 17:20 JST

The Abe Cabinet has decided that war-renouncing Article 9 of the Constitution does not necessarily ban Japan from possessing and using nuclear weapons.

In an April 1 written answer to opposition lawmakers in the Diet, the Cabinet also says the government “firmly maintains a policy principle that it does not possess nuclear weapons of any type under the three non-nuclear principles.”

The address was adopted at a Cabinet meeting in response to memorandums of questions submitted to the Lower House by Seiji Osaka of the largest opposition Democratic Party and Takako Suzuki, an independent.

Successive administrations have maintained a constitutional interpretation that Paragraph 2 of Article 9 does not ban Japan from possessing armed forces that is the minimum necessary for self-defense.

In a statement to the Diet in 1978, Prime Minister Takeo Fukuda said Article 9 does not absolutely prohibit the country from possessing nuclear weapons as long as it is limited to the minimum necessary level.

But Fukuda added that it is Japan’s national principle to abide by the three non-nuclear principles, introduced by Prime Minister Eisaku Sato in 1967.

The written address adopted by the Abe Cabinet on April 1 maintains the previous governments’ interpretation of the Constitution that Article 9 allows the country to possess an armed force that is the minimum necessary for self-defense.

“Even if it involves nuclear weapons, the Constitution does not necessarily ban the possession of them as long as they are restricted to such a minimum necessary level,” it says.

The written address also referred a controversial remark by Yusuke Yokobatake, director-general of the Cabinet Legislation Bureau, at the Upper House Budget Committee on March 18 that he does not believe the Constitution bans the use of any type of nuclear weapon.

It says Yokobatake’s remark only reaffirmed the government’s principle.

Dealing with stockpiles of plutonium

April 1, 2016

Ongoing Nuclear Security Summit sheds light on plutonium problems

<http://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20160401/p2a/00m/0na/023000c>

AIKEN, South Carolina -- Close attention is now focused on the difficulty of dealing with the stockpiles of plutonium accumulating around the world as the Nuclear Security Summit opened in Washington on March 31.

- **【Related】** South Carolina governor says plutonium shipment from Japan should be rerouted
- **【Related】** Ship likely carrying plutonium departs for U.S.

U.S. President Barack Obama, who has won the Nobel Peace Prize for pursuing a world without nuclear weapons, is hosting the last Nuclear Security Summit before the end of his second term.

During the conference, the Japanese and U.S. governments are expected to emphasize that the two countries are stepping up efforts to strengthen nuclear security by returning plutonium for research purposes and highly enriched uranium that Washington has provided to Japan as pledged.

However, plutonium has nowhere to go even in the United States. A growing number of residents of South Carolina, which accepts plutonium from Japan and other countries, are voicing opposition to disposal in the state.

Rick Osbon, mayor of Aiken, South Carolina, voices opposition to using the Department of Energy's Savannah River Site in the city as a final disposal site for nuclear materials, though he does not object to storing such substances there over a long period. Plutonium and other nuclear materials from Ibaraki Prefecture are expected to be brought to the site as early as May.

The Savannah River Site used to produce plutonium and other materials for nuclear weapons. However, its role has changed since the end of the Cold War. The site stores plutonium made redundant by U.S. and Russian arms reductions. Moreover, the facility accepts nuclear materials from overseas to reduce the risk of nuclear proliferation, such as theft by terrorists.

Aiken and Augusta, Georgia host atomic power stations and other nuclear-related facilities. Four nuclear reactors under construction in the country are in these two states.

Despite South Carolina's close connections to nuclear energy, Gov. Nikki Haley urged the energy secretary to suspend transport of nuclear substances to the state or change their destination. This is because of fears that plutonium and nuclear waste brought to the state could be stored permanently as even the U.S. cannot find a final disposal site easily.

A 56-year-old Aiken resident said locals' attitude to hosting the Savannah River Site has changed. He says locals had believed that they were playing a part in the U.S. nuclear strategy and contributing to the defense of their country. Noting that they are now contributing more to the nuclear waste business than to nuclear non-proliferation, he expressed concerns that the city could end up being a final disposal site.

The Savannah River Site houses 13 metric tons of plutonium and other materials extracted from nuclear warheads. These will be joined by the 331 kilograms of plutonium being brought from Japan.

The U.S. Department of Energy has pledged to shift six tons out of the 13 of plutonium stored at the Savannah River Site to an experimental final disposal facility in New Mexico. However, the test facility has been shut down since a 2014 fire and radiation leak.

Alarmed by the governor's "revolt," the energy department announced that it will reopen the experimental facility by the end of this year. However, it remains unclear where the remaining seven tons will be accepted.

Some observers have suggested that the governor's "revolt" is a protest against the Obama administration's decision to suspend works on a uranium-plutonium mixed-oxide fuel processing facility under construction at the Savannah River Site. In other words, they believe that Gov. Haley's actions are a political gambit launched because local political and business communities expect an economic boost from the facility. However, local residents are increasingly wary of the move.

The 31-year-old deputy leader of a local residents' panel formed to reflect citizens' opinions on the facility's management expressed concerns that radioactive waste is brought into the facility without any clear prospects of final disposal.

A 62-year-old member of the panel also said it would be unacceptable to local residents for radioactive substances to be stored permanently in the city.

Local media played up the news of the radioactive substance shipment from Japan.

Noting that the United States has abandoned reprocessing spent nuclear fuel to extract plutonium, the 62-year-old panel member urged Japan not to increase its stockpile of plutonium any further.

Unlike plutonium for research purposes, Japan has adopted a policy of disposing of nuclear waste generated at nuclear plants on its own. However, Japan faces an even more difficult road to select a final disposal site than the United States.

Former crew members to sue Japanese govt for US H-bomb test

April 8, 2016

Long kept in the dark, Japan fishermen, kin to sue Tokyo for 1954 U.S. H-bomb test redress

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2016/04/08/national/crime-legal/long-kept-dark-japan-fishermen-kin-sue-tokyo-1954-u-s-h-bomb-test-redress/#.VwerUnpdeot>

Kyodo

KOCHI – Former Japanese fishermen plan to **seek compensation from the Japanese government for keeping undisclosed for decades records of their radiation exposure linked to a series of U.S. hydrogen bomb tests in the Pacific**, sources said Thursday.

About 20 people, including relatives of deceased fishermen, are expected to file a lawsuit with the Kochi District Court possibly next month, each seeking about ¥2 million (\$18,000) in compensation, the sources said.

It is the first time that a state compensation lawsuit will be filed in Japan in connection with the hydrogen bomb tests the United States conducted on the Bikini Atoll in the Marshall Islands in 1954 that began with a test explosion code-named Castle Bravo on March 1.

Castle Bravo was the largest-ever nuclear weapon test the United States conducted, and it spewed radioactive fallout over a vast area. The Japanese tuna fishing boat Fukuryu Maru No. 5 was doused with the fallout and one of its 23-man crew died about six months later.

As other Japanese ships, many from Kochi, were sailing in the vicinity around the time of the hydrogen bomb tests, calls later emerged that the state should disclose the results of radiation checks conducted on the ships at that time.

But it was only in September 2014 that the Health, Labor and Welfare Ministry released the documents, retracting its earlier position that the records no longer existed.

The ministry acknowledged that crew members on 10 ships, among some 500 vessels in the vicinity of the tests, received a certain level of exposure, but asserted that the doses did “not reach levels that could damage their health.”

The former crew members plan to argue in the lawsuit that the state intentionally hid the records. As a result, they were deprived of the chance to exercise their right to seek damages from the United States and suffered emotional distress, the sources said.

They will also point out that the government failed to conduct any followup studies on the crews of ships other than the Fukuryu Maru No. 5, also known as the Lucky Dragon, and failed to offer compensation after Japan and the United States reached a political settlement in January 1955.

The United States, without admitting liability, paid \$2 million as sympathy money to Japan over the issue. The funds, then worth about ¥720 million, were distributed mainly to crew members of the Fukuryu Maru and the fishing industry in general, which was seriously damaged by a public scare about contaminated marine products.

The former crew members and kin of deceased sailors are expected to form a group of plaintiffs in early May to prepare for filing the lawsuit, the sources said.

Many of them also applied in February for workers’ compensation for cancer and other diseases they say were caused by exposure to radiation from the U.S. hydrogen bomb tests.

Avoid the term "inhumane" when talking about nukes

April 8, 2015

G-7 Hiroshima statement won’t use ‘inhumane’ to describe nukes

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201604080030.html>

By HAJIMU TAKEDA/ Staff Writer

Japan will not mention the “inhumane aspects” of nuclear weapons in the Hiroshima Declaration issued after the Group of Seven foreign ministers meeting next week to avoid upsetting the nuclear-power members, sources said.

As host of this year’s G-7 summit and the only nation hit by atomic weapons, Japan has been planning a statement that expresses the determination of member nations to work toward a nuclear-free world. Japan has referred to the inhumane aspects of nuclear weapons in resolutions proposed at other international conferences.

But in light of the nuclear powers’ reactions to such wording, the Hiroshima Declaration will likely only refer to the devastating consequences of the use of nuclear weapons, according to the sources.

“To the United States, Britain and France, ‘inhumane aspects’ has become synonymous with radical elements who disagree with their national security policy,” a senior Foreign Ministry official said. “It would be impossible to convince them to go along with such wording.”

The G-7 foreign ministers will gather in Hiroshima on April 10 and 11. The G-7 summit will take place in Shima, Mie Prefecture, from May 26 to 27.

Japan certainly does not want the foreign ministers’ meeting to conclude with a major rift among the G-7 members over the nuclear weapons issue.

At the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons held in May 2015, some non-nuclear powers referred to the inhumane nature of nuclear weapons as the basis for legally banning such weapons.

Such wording led to strong resistance from nuclear powers, such as the United States.

When Japan proposed a resolution to the U.N. General Assembly in autumn 2015 that emphasized the inhumane aspects of nuclear weapons, the United States, Britain and France all abstained from the vote. Japan had submitted similar resolutions on an annual basis, and the United States and Britain served as co-sponsors in 2014. But both countries decided against sponsoring the 2015 proposal because of the humanitarian reference.

Japan is planning to have the foreign ministers of all seven nations, including the nuclear powers, visit the Peace Memorial Park in Hiroshima on the sidelines of their meeting.

Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida, who represents a district in Hiroshima Prefecture, will also show his counterparts around the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum.

Japan also hopes that U.S. President Barack Obama will visit Hiroshima when he comes for the G-7 summit in May.

Maybe everybody should visit Hiroshima

Kishida: G7 ministers can learn from Hiroshima

http://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20160408_18/

Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida has expressed hope that his counterparts from the other G7 countries will have a better understanding of the effects of an atomic bombing when they visit Hiroshima City.

Kishida told reporters on Friday it is very important for the foreign ministers to take a look at many things in Hiroshima with their own eyes when they visit the city on Sunday and Monday.

The city that suffered the 1945 atomic bombing will host the G7 foreign ministerial meeting. During their stay, the ministers will visit the city's Peace Memorial Park and museum. They will also offer flowers at a cenotaph dedicated to the victims.

The G7 includes three nuclear powers -- the United States, Britain and France.

Kishida also referred to the foreign ministerial meeting of non-nuclear powers held in the city in 2014. He recalled that the participants all said the visit to the city's atomic bomb monuments was an unforgettable experience.

He expressed hope that the G7 foreign ministers will have a similar hands-on experience.

Fourth and final Nuclear Security summit

Taking stock of the final Nuclear Security Summit

- Apr 6, 2016

CANBERRA – Like the first, the fourth and final Nuclear Security Summit (NSS) was held in Washington, with others in Seoul (2012) and The Hague (2014). This article makes six arguments by way of a summary stock-take of nuclear security.

First, the threat of nuclear terrorism is real. With 15,000 nuclear warheads, around 1,400 metric tons of highly enriched uranium (HEU) and 500 tons of separated plutonium held at over 100 sites in more than 30 countries, there is enough nuclear materials to increase the world's stock of nuclear bombs to 10 times their present number.

The risk is threefold. Terrorists could acquire HEU or plutonium, make a nuclear bomb and explode it in a target of their choice. Or they could sabotage a nuclear plant and cause an accident along the lines of the Fukushima meltdown five years ago. Or they could steal radiological material from a hospital or scientific lab, wrap it around conventional explosives, and detonate it in a crowded quarter of an economically key city to create panic and cause massive economic disruption with contamination of buildings that would require weeks of cleanup.

The known evidence confirms that al-Qaida has been interested in pursuing all three options and Belgian authorities have indicated that the terrorists responsible for the Brussels attacks were watching people employed at a nuclear power plant. It is safe to assume their intentions were not benign.

The worrying thought is that terrorists need to succeed in only one plot, while law enforcement authorities must succeed in discovering and thwarting every plot. The comforting thought is that within each plot, the terrorists must escape detection at every stage while authorities need to penetrate just one stage to defeat them. Overall, the conclusion is that the risk of nuclear terrorism is low probability but high impact.

Second, the gravity and magnitude of the problem was recognized long before the first NSS in 2010 and efforts to address the threats have also been underway for a quarter century. When the former Soviet Union imploded, it left behind the largest amounts of nuclear materials, stored and being used in the biggest number of plants and facilities spread across the biggest geographical area, with many vulnerable to theft and sabotage. The Russia-U.S. hire purchase agreement and the Nunn-Lugar cooperative threat reduction programs in particular have been brilliantly successful in reducing these threats dramatically in several ex-Soviet countries.

For example, a trilateral Russia-Kazakhstan-U.S. program locked down and secured nuclear materials lying around as "scrap" in the Degelen mountain, the site of over 200 nuclear tests. In October 2012, a three-sided stone monument was unveiled with the simple sentence in all three languages etched on it: "The world has become safer."

Third, the terrorist attacks of 9/11 heightened the urgency of the need to secure nuclear materials against the risk of terrorists getting hold of some. U.S. President Barack Obama incorporated this into his larger nuclear policy agenda to launch the NSS. The biggest benefit of the summit process has been to raise the profile of the problem and get buy-in from 50-plus leaders. There has also been substantial progress in national implementation of various security measures.

Between them, the old efforts and new NSS-based push have ensured that 30 of the 57 countries with weapons-usable nuclear materials have eliminated all such material, typically with U.S. assistance; security arrangements have been tightened in all countries that retain nuclear materials; over 100 research reactors using HEU as a fuel have shut down and more than 60 have converted to low enriched uranium in a program begun in the late 1970s; and many more countries have become party to the various global governance instruments.

Fourth, that said, significant gaps and therefore vulnerabilities remain and so the NSS agenda is incomplete. Around one-quarter of the countries have not yet joined the 1980 Convention on the Physical

Protection of Nuclear Materials. Its 2005 amendment still requires eight more ratifications to enter into force 11 years on. The CPPNM is the cornerstone of the international regime to assure the physical protection of nuclear materials while in storage or during domestic and international transport. The 2005 International Convention on the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism (ICSANT) is in force but just over half the U.N. member states (103 of 193) are states parties. In other words the diffuse patchwork of national pledges and implementation need to be reinforced by legally binding, uniform and enforceable global standards.

The gaps and vulnerabilities are particularly acute in the Asia-Pacific region. We lack a regional equivalent of the European Atomic Community. The East Asia Summit should initiate studies to this end with a sense of urgency to promulgate transparent regional norms and surveillance to minimize the chances of another major nuclear disaster and institute regionwide coordinated emergency response mechanisms.

The third biennial Nuclear Security Index published by the Washington-based Nuclear Threat Initiative shows most Asian countries fall near the bottom of theft and sabotage precautions with respect to nuclear materials, plants, facilities and personnel (to guard against insider threats).

Fifth, attention to nuclear security has so far been limited to materials in civilian control, when the reality is that 83 percent of all nuclear materials are under military control. Four years ago a group of peace activists breached the security around a nuclear complex in Oak Ridge, Tennessee. As U.S. Senators Sam Nunn and Richard Lugar noted, if an 82-year-old unarmed nun can penetrate America's nuclear Fort Knox, we have to be concerned about terrorists gaining access to nuclear materials.

Within the requirements of classified programs and information, we somehow have to bring military-use nuclear materials inside the process of securing all nuclear materials to international standards. Until then the nuclear security framework will not be comprehensive, universal and effective.

Finally, a single issue is rarely suitable for an annual summit process. The NSS has been the biggest gathering of world leaders on nuclear policy. (Dare we dream of a bigger gathering of world leaders on nuclear abolition as the best available guarantee of nuclear security?) Each summit after the first suffered from the law of diminishing returns and Russia is right in saying there was little point to the fourth (although this was likely more an excuse than the reason for Moscow's failure to attend).

Because the agenda is unfinished, however, the momentum must be sustained through five avenues: the United Nations; the International Atomic Energy Agency, for example by adopting its rigorous guidelines and standards and utilizing its peer review services, as Australia has done, in addition to its illicit incidents trafficking database; Interpol for combating nuclear smuggling; the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, co-chaired by Russia and the U.S.; and the Group of Seven Global Partnership, although this would almost certainly be better handed over to the Group of 20 as the globally more representative body.

Ramesh Thakur is director of the Center for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament, Australian National University and co-convenor of the Asia-Pacific Leadership Network for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament.

Terrorism and nuke ssues for G-7 in Hiroshima

April 10, 2016

Terrorism, nuclear issues on agenda at G-7 foreign ministers' meeting in Hiroshima

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2016/04/10/national/politics-diplomacy/terrorism-nuclear-issues-agenda-g-7-foreign-ministers-meeting-hiroshima/#.VwqoiXpdeov>

by Ayako Mie

Staff Writer

HIROSHIMA – The Group of Seven (G-7) foreign ministers' meeting kicked off Sunday in the city of Hiroshima to pave the way for their leaders' late May summit which will be held in Mie Prefecture. At the end of the two-day meeting, foreign ministers from Japan, the United States, Canada, France, Germany, Italy and the European Union are expected to adopt a communique, as well as the Hiroshima Declaration, which will aim for a nuclear weapons-free world, and a statement regarding maritime security.

The meeting and the statements will set the stage for the G-7 summit scheduled for May 26 and 27 in Ise-Shima, Mie Prefecture. A total of 11 related meetings will be held in Japan through September, including a gathering of G-7 finance ministers and central bank governors in Sendai immediately before the summit. On the first day of their meeting, the ministers discussed global concerns such as terrorism and refugee issues. Counterterrorism is the most imminent threat to Europe, which has been a frequent target of attacks, notably by the Islamic State extremist group.

Last November, IS launched a series of shooting and bomb attacks in Paris, in which 130 people were killed. The group also claimed responsibility for two other attacks launched in the Belgian capital, Brussels, last month. In those attacks, 32 people died.

Brussels came under fire after miscommunication and other errors failed to prevent the country's deadliest-ever terrorist attack. Belgian authorities admitted that they missed an alert from Turkish authorities about Ibrahim El Bakraoui, one of the Brussels suicide bombers, who was arrested on suspicion of terrorism activities last year in Turkey.

The Belgian prosecutor's office said El Bakraoui's brother, Khalid, who along with Ibrahim also detonated a suicide belt at the airport, had been on the run since December in connection with the Paris attacks. These acknowledgements underscore that the European Union and the global community need a better coordination to fight against terrorism.

The G-7 foreign ministers denounced indiscriminate killing by terrorists and agreed to lead global cooperation to fight violent and extremist attacks.

Japan's foreign minister, Fumio Kishida, also said that G-7 nations should complement each other by utilizing their competitive edge in fighting terrorism and dealing with the refugee crisis, another big concern for European Union nations.

Although Germany has found itself one of the biggest recipients of refugees, German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier was absent from the first day's meetings because his flight was delayed in China. The ministers also talked about issues in the Middle East, such as Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Iran and Libya. For Kishida, a third-generation Lower House lawmaker from Hiroshima, one of the main events of the meeting will take place Monday when he hosts the dignitaries during a visit to the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum.

This is the first time G-7 foreign ministers and nuclear powers, such as the United States, France, and Germany, will visit the museum. They will also lay floral tributes at the cenotaph located inside Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park.

Kishida has repeatedly said he hopes to bring global leaders to Hiroshima to experience the reality of the atomic bomb. To this end, he hopes to bridge differences between the world's nuclear and nonnuclear powers by adopting the Hiroshima Declaration on Monday.

But any declaration is unlikely to mention "the inhuman aspect of atomic bomb," something Japan has emphasized for a long time.

Last year, when Japan proposed a U.N. resolution including such a phrase, the U.S., Britain and France abstained from casting their votes.

In an interview with the Chugoku Shimbun, a local Hiroshima daily, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry said the U.S. supports a world without nuclear weapons.

Yet he said the U.S. will pursue the goal by taking what he referred to as realistic and pragmatic measures. Kerry added that it is critical to find methods to make progress on nuclear disarmament to reduce the risk to America, its allies and the entire human race.

Meanwhile, as this is the first time the G-7 related meetings have been held in Asia for eight years, and Japan is the only G-7 member from the region, Kishida hopes to take the initiative in talking about territorial issues in the South China Sea, where Beijing has carried out massive land reclamation projects and deployed radar and surface-to-air missiles.

Without naming China, the statement on maritime security, which is likely to be adopted Monday, is expected to say countries should abide by international court rulings in dealing with territorial disputes. In the coming month, the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague is expected to issue a ruling over the territorial dispute between the Philippines and China.

Beijing has expressed concern about Japan, which it sees as siding with other Southeast Asian nations that are at odds with Beijing regarding the territorial dispute in the South China Sea.

After talking with Steinmeier on Saturday, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said bringing up the South China Sea issue at the Hiroshima conference will offer no solutions but only to affect the stability of regional security.

Not just a ceremony?

April 12, 2016

EDITORIAL: G-7 Hiroshima talks should reignite drive to eliminate nukes

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201604120024.html>

The top diplomats of the Group of Seven leading powers should build on what they saw and heard in Hiroshima to help accelerate the world's march toward a future without nuclear arms.

During their April 10-11 trips to Hiroshima, the foreign ministers of the seven countries, including the United States, which dropped an atomic bomb on the city in 1945, visited the Peace Memorial Park and laid wreaths at the Cenotaph for the A-bomb Victims on April 11.

In addition to the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum, the officials made unscheduled visits to the Hiroshima Peace Memorial, or the Atomic Bomb Dome, a famous visual symbol of the nuclear devastation. During a news conference after his visit to the peace park, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry offered no apology or condolences to the victims and survivors of the atomic bombing. But he delivered a message to the world in the museum's guest book: "Everyone in the world should see and feel the power of this memorial."

Speaking to reporters, Kerry said, "So I hope one day the president of the United States will be among the everyone who is able to come here."

Sunao Tsuboi, a 90-year-old atomic bomb survivor, expressed his appreciation about Kerry's visit to Hiroshima. "I'm not fully satisfied, but things have come a long way to reach this point."

Many people probably felt that it was an important moment when the country that dropped the bomb ruminated on the terrible evils of such weapons of mass destruction.

Kerry also stressed his commitment to working to realize a world without nuclear weapons. That's exactly the biggest wish among people in Hiroshima and Nagasaki and atomic bomb survivors.

U.S. President Barack Obama's term will expire in January. If he sends out a message calling for the elimination of nuclear arms in an atomic-bombed city, its impact will be immeasurable. We urge Obama to make the political decision to visit Hiroshima for the future of the world.

The gathering of the G-7 foreign ministers in Hiroshima should not be allowed to end up a mere ceremony. The G-7 nations have to follow up their foreign ministers' meeting in the city with specific actions to promote nuclear disarmament.

Unfortunately, the Hiroshima Declaration, a statement issued by the G-7 foreign ministers intended to serve as a guiding document for international efforts to push toward a nuclear-free future, lacked the impact needed to revitalize the cause.

The document referred to the devastation and suffering experienced by people in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. But it did not mention the "inhumane aspects of nuclear weapons," a concept that has gained traction in international discussions on nuclear disarmament in recent years.

The statement also said further progress toward a world without nuclear weapons can only be achieved through a "realistic and incremental approach."

This phrase indicates that the leading powers regard the elimination of nuclear arms as a goal for the distant future.

This is an effective rebuttal to the argument made by many non-nuclear countries that nuclear weapons are inhumane and should be banned under an international treaty.

Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida, who put together the views of the seven countries into the declaration, said the document will help re-energize the movement toward a world without nuclear weapons.

But the declaration has raised concerns about the possible widening of the rift between the nuclear powers and the rest of the world.

As the only country to suffer nuclear attacks, Japan should do more to serve as an effective intermediary between the two sides.

Russia, which has antagonized the G-7 over the conflict in Ukraine, is showing signs of becoming even more dependent on nuclear arms. China is building up its nuclear arsenal, while North Korea continues conducting nuclear tests.

There are no prospects for swift progress toward a world without nuclear weapons.

After the landmark meeting in Hiroshima, the G-7 countries should tackle with renewed vigor the formidable challenge of figuring out an effective way to jump-start stalled nuclear disarmament efforts.

How can G-7 foreign ministers' visit to Hiroshima lead to nuclear disarmament?

<http://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20160411/p2a/00m/0na/010000c>

April 11, 2016 (Mainichi Japan)

The Group of Seven (G-7) foreign ministers visited the cenotaph for the atomic bomb victims in Hiroshima during their conference in the city on April 11 -- **71 years after the attack**. While their visit to the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park should be appreciated as the first step toward a world without nuclear weapons, how the G-7 countries will use the visit to achieve this goal has been called into question.

- **【Related】** People of Hiroshima happy to see G-7 ministers, but lament lack of denuclearization
- **【Related】** President Obama, please come to Hiroshima
- **【Related】** Hiroshima A-bomb survivor wants people to think about lives of victims

U.S. President Barack Obama called for a world without nuclear weapons in 2009, and the United States and Russia signed a nuclear arms reduction treaty the following year to limit the number of strategic nuclear warheads that they can deploy. These moves gave the international community the impression that efforts toward nuclear disarmament had gained momentum.

However, the security environment is getting increasingly serious as Russian President Vladimir Putin announced in June 2015 that his country would enhance its nuclear capability following the Ukraine crisis and North Korea conducted a nuclear test this past January.

At the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) in April and May last year, the final draft of a joint statement was not adopted because of a conflict over the Middle East issue, and non-nuclear powers expressed displeasure at the failure. Japan, which suffered the atomic bombing but is also under the U.S. nuclear umbrella, has been in a dilemma between pro-nuclear countries and those opposed to nuclear power.

Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida, who has been elected from this atomic-bombed city as a legislator and chairs the G-7 foreign ministerial conference, was particularly enthusiastic about realizing the G-7 foreign ministers' visit to the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park. "We'd like to increase momentum within the G-7, which includes both nuclear and non-nuclear powers, for efforts to achieve a world without nuclear weapons."

Therefore, the historic visit by the G-7 foreign ministers to the memorial park should not end up being just a ceremony.

Disarmament: Japan sees itself as mediator

April 12, 2016

Japan willing to lead nuclear disarmament

http://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20160412_03/

The Japanese government intends to work toward nuclear disarmament by mediating between nuclear and non-nuclear countries. Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida has expressed willingness to take the initiative in international negotiations.

He spoke with NHK on Monday after the meeting of the Group of 7 foreign ministers in the city of Hiroshima.

Kishida said a party must act as a bridge between nuclear and non-nuclear powers to foster the cooperation needed to achieve concrete, practical results.

He said Japan fits the requirements as the only nation to have experienced atomic bombings.

The G7 foreign ministers, including those from the nuclear-armed nations of the United States, Britain and France, visited Hiroshima's Peace Memorial Park on Monday.

They issued a declaration that focuses on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

The Japanese government considers it significant that the G7 nations, including nuclear and non-nuclear nations, pledged commitment to creating a world without nuclear weapons.

Non-nuclear weapon states have proposed an immediate legal ban on nuclear arms. But nuclear powers oppose the idea.

How deep is G-7 commitment to peace?

April 11, 2016

G-7 ministers adopt Hiroshima Declaration hoping to add momentum to nonproliferation movement

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2016/04/11/national/politics-diplomacy/g-7-ministers-adopt-hiroshima-declaration-hoping-add-momentum-nonproliferation-movement/#.VwvtXnpdeov>

by Ayako Mie

Staff Writer

The Group of Seven foreign ministers concluded a historic two-day meeting in Hiroshima on Monday that saw them discuss the goal of global nuclear disarmament in the first city destroyed by an atomic bomb.

The meeting was a victory for the people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, which were A-bombed just days apart toward the end of the war in August 1945, and a feather in the cap of Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida, who is rumored to want Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's job.

Kishida's success in bringing U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry to Hiroshima may pave the way for a similar visit by President Barack Obama when the G-7 summit is held in Mie Prefecture next month.

The meeting ended with Kishida's adoption of a joint communique, a Hiroshima Declaration and two other statements on maritime security and nonproliferation. The four statements reflect global concerns including terrorism, North Korea's escalating provocations, maritime security in the South China Sea and the G-7 members' commitment to work toward a world without nuclear weapons.

The adoption of the Hiroshima Declaration is especially symbolic for Hiroshima and Nagasaki at a time when global momentum for getting rid of the world's nuclear arsenals is low, especially after the collapse of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference last year.

"This is the first time for the G-7 countries to get together to unanimously adopt a statement on nuclear disarmament after the NPT Review Conference, which I think is significant and will revive the momentum for disarmament," Kishida said at the concluding news conference.

The foreign ministers not only experienced what Kishida calls "the reality of the atomic bomb" by visiting Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum and the Atomic Bomb Dome, but also offered floral tributes at the cenotaph in Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park.

"Going through this museum was a reminder of the indisputable truth that war must never be the first resort. It must be the last resort, the utter failure of all diplomacy," said Kerry, who became the first sitting U.S. secretary of state to visit an A-bomb site. "It was a reminder for all of us why these meetings and relationships matter so much. The peaceful, stable international systems we've built in the decades since World War II are not a given, not automatic."

The much-expected Hiroshima Declaration, which said the G-7 countries "share the deep desire of the people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki that nuclear weapons never be used again," reflects Kishida's so-called five principles, the five pillars of the speech he made at the NPT Review Conference last April at the United Nations.

The principle includes transparency of nuclear force, deeper reduction of all types of nuclear weapons, common recognition of the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons, and the visit to Hiroshima and Nagasaki by political leaders and youths.

The statement emphasizes the importance of the NPT, called for a ban on nuclear test explosions, and demands that all states “sign and ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test Ban Treaty without delay and conditions,” although the U.S. itself has not yet done so.

We welcome the efforts taken by the nuclear-weapon States in the G-7 that have enhanced transparency,” the statement said.

The statement was a step forward in that they included the part that encouraged “political leaders” like the G-7 foreign ministers and “other visitors” to visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki. This was a proposal made by Japan last year at the NPT Review Conference that was removed from the statement due to staunch opposition from China.

Yet the reactions as to how the statement describes the atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki were divided. While the Hiroshima Declaration says those cities “experienced immense devastation and human suffering as a consequence of the atomic bombings,” it does not mention “humanitarian consequences,” one of the Kishida principles. But Japanese government officials stressed the wording was stronger than the Kishida principles.

“It is a concession to the United States,” said Gregory Kulacki, senior analyst and China project major at the global security program of Union of Concerned Scientists.

Kulacki said that “humanitarian consequences” clearly refers to a convention to ban nuclear weapons, which the major nuclear powers, including the United States, are against. In February, Japanese Ambassador to the Conference on Disarmament Toshio Sano said adopting a nuclear ban treaty is still premature given the security situation and because the countries who possess nuclear weapons did not take part in the meeting of a U.N. working group of nuclear disarmament.

Naoki Iwatsuki, a professor of international law at Tokyo-based Rikkyo University, also said the word “humanitarian” carries a connotation of condemnation.

“They used more neutral words by choosing ‘human suffering,’ ” said Iwatsuki. “If they really wanted to show the commitment to nuclear disarmament, they could have used the word ‘humanitarian.’ ”

The G-7 foreign ministers’ meeting was a curtain-raiser for the G-7 summit scheduled for May 26 and 27 in the Ise-Shima region in Mie Prefecture. The biggest global concern raised at the foreign ministers’ meeting and will be discussed at the G-7 leaders’ summit is counterterrorism, at a time when extreme militant groups such as Islamic State are staging brutal terror acts.

To lay the groundwork for the leaders’ summit, the communique said the G-7 countries are working on “a G-7 action plan on international counter terrorism that will include concrete measures to enhance G-7 and international counterterrorism efforts.” That plan is to be adopted at the summit next month.

Kishida said the foreign ministers had a very candid and heated discussion about security in Asia, which Kishida worked to bring to the table as the only Asian member of the G-7 and for the first G-7 summit in Asia in eight years.

As for North Korea, the statement said they condemn “in the strongest terms” the North’s fourth nuclear test on Jan. 6, followed by the launch of a long-range satellite which many claimed was a cover for a long-range missile. It was an upgrade from last year’s communique, which only said that “we strongly condemn North Korea’s continued development of its nuclear and ballistic missile programs.”

The G-7 foreign ministers also adopted a statement on maritime security, which reportedly raised such heated discussions among the foreign ministers that they ran out of time. This was the second year for the G-7 to issue a separate statement, but their concerns were more pronounced this year, by calling on “the peaceful management and settlement of maritime disputes” in good faith and in accordance with international law, including civil arbitration.

The statement also said G-7 ministers are “concerned about the situation in the East and South China Seas,” and expressed strong opposition to “any intimidating, coercive or provocative unilateral actions that could alter the status quo and increase tensions,” citing land reclamation efforts.

The statement or Kishida during the news conference made no mention of China, as G-7 countries do not want to provoke Beijing by blatantly pointing out that it has been conducting major land reclamation projects, and has deployed radar and surface-to-air missiles in the South China Sea. Yet the mention of the arbitration court was timely as the international arbitration court in The Hague is expected to announce a ruling over the territorial dispute between the Philippines and China in coming months.

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi on Saturday said bringing up the South China Sea issue at the Hiroshima conference would offer no solutions but only damage regional stability.

New nuke security agreement to take effect in May

April 8, 2016

Key Nuclear Security Agreement To Enter Into Force Next Month, Says IAEA

<http://www.nucnet.org/all-the-news/2016/04/08/key-nuclear-security-agreement-to-enter-into-force-next-month>

Security & Safety

8 Apr (NucNet): A nuclear security agreement that will take effect on 8 May 2016 will reduce the risk of a terrorist attack on a nuclear power plant and make it harder to smuggle nuclear material, the International Atomic Energy Agency said today.

The IAEA said the entry into force of the Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (CPPNM) was secured today with the deposit of the instrument of ratification by Nicaragua, which brought the number of adherences to 102, the threshold required for the agreement to come into effect in 30 days.

The IAEA said the Amendment, adopted more than a decade ago, will make it legally binding on countries to protect nuclear facilities.

It will also extend the CPPNM's application to nuclear material in domestic use, storage and transport. The CPPNM, the only legally binding international undertaking in the area of physical protection of nuclear material, entered into force in 1987.

Details online: <http://bit.ly/1Vd6SbA>

Establish legal framework to ban nuclear weapons

May 2, 2016

Hiroshima mayor appeals for nuclear ban

http://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20160502_10/

The mayor of Hiroshima Kazumi Matsui has appealed for a legal framework to ban nuclear weapons as a United Nations' working group on the issue begins a meeting in Geneva.

The UN working group will hold its second round of talks from Monday to May 13th.

Matsui spoke on Sunday at a meeting of an international non-governmental organization in the Swiss city.

He said **it is vital to establish a legal framework to prohibit nuclear weapons in order to achieve global nuclear disarmament.**

He said at the same time the world needs to break free from a security system based on the idea of nuclear deterrence.

He added that the international community needs to build a more stable foundation for peace "rooted in an awareness that we all belong to one human family."

Hiroshima bombing survivor Setsuko Thurlow who now lives in Canada also spoke at the meeting. She was 13 when the bomb exploded above Hiroshima.

She said that the world is tired of the Nuclear Non- Proliferation Treaty and other existing frameworks which have failed to bring about the abolishment of nuclear arms.

She called the working group meeting a very important opportunity which requires an unprecedented strong approach.

She added that **many of the survivors who wanted to see nuclear arms abolished in their lifetime have died and that those still alive do not have much more time.**

Hiroshima story told through pictures

May 6, 2016

Teacher's tragic A-bomb story told in pictures in Nagasaki

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201605060069.html>

By SHOHEI OKADA/ Staff Writer



Kazuko Yumii holds a student in her arms before the girl dies in a scene from a picture-story show at the Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum in Nagasaki on April 10. (Shohei Okada)

NAGASAKI--Kazuko Yumii was determined to take the story of her wartime experience to the grave. But decades after World War II ended, Yumii told a city official what happened to her when the atomic bomb exploded over Nagasaki on Aug. 9, 1945.

What the official heard was a story of tragedy and shame, words so moving that Yumii's experience is now being told through picture-story shows at the Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum here.

Yumii, a 24-year-old teacher at Yamazato national school, was digging a bomb shelter at the school in August 1945. The school happened to be about 700 meters from ground zero.

She flopped forward on the ground when she felt the shock wave and heard the deafening roar of the nuclear blast. Sometime later, the teacher looked for a pupil who had called out to her before the explosion. The child could not be found.

A girl then staggered toward Yumii.

"My mom and dad are both dead," the girl said, looking into Yumii's eyes and then dying in her arms.

About 1,300 of the school's 1,600 students were killed by the atomic bombing.

Yumii's story, titled "Hitomi no naka no Kodomotachi" (Children in My Eyes), has been told more than 100 times so far at the museum. She died before the picture cards for the story-telling shows were completed in 2009.

At one show on April 10, visitors cried as they listened to the words and viewed the accompanying picture cards. Foreign tourists also watched the show while reading the text translated into English.

Yasuhiro Onoe was the city government employee who heard Yumii's story and decided to produce the shows.

Onoe, 57, became acquainted with her in 2006, when he was visiting an uncle in a hospital where the former teacher was also being treated.

At the urging of his aunt, Onoe asked Yumii to share her wartime experience.

She was initially reluctant to recall those tragic days, but she accepted his request and began to speak slowly.

She later poured out details of what she had went through toward the end of World War II.

Onoe already had a connection with Yumii. He graduated from Yamazato Elementary School, the successor of the school where Yumii had worked.

When he was a student there, scars from the atomic bombing were still evident on the school building.

Onoe visited her three times at the hospital and scribbled down all her words.

"Yumii harbored a sense of guilt," he recalled feeling at that time.

As a teacher, she had encouraged her students to join the nation's war effort with the spirit of "I won't demand anything until I win," a wartime slogan that had circulated throughout the country.

"I was under the impression that she was ashamed (of what she told her students)," Onoe said.

Onoe said Yumii looked relieved when she finished sharing her account.

He then asked Hidehiko Tajima to produce pictures based on Yumii's experience.

Both Onoe and Tajima were members of Mugentai, a group that visits local nursing homes to entertain residents through singing and other activities.

Since December 2011, Mugentai has been offering the free picture-book shows at the museum at 10:30 a.m. and 11 a.m. on the second Sunday of each month.

"I am happy to be able to pass down her experience in the form of a show," Onoe said. "I would like young people to watch the performance. Yumii's experience should be remembered."

Nuclear disarmament a "moral imperative"

May 6, 2016

Moral imperative of ridding the world of nuclear arms

by Daisaku Ikeda

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2016/05/06/commentary/japan-commentary/moral-imperative-ridding-world-nuclear-arms/#.Vyx6IORdeos>

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry recently visited the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum. He described it as a "gut-wrenching" and "stunning" experience that he would never forget, and went on to say, "Everyone in the world should see and feel the power of this memorial."

There is increasing speculation that U.S. President Barack Obama, who in his 2009 speech in Prague called for a world without nuclear weapons, terming their continued existence "the most dangerous legacy of the Cold War," might also visit Hiroshima this month during his trip to Japan for the Group of Seven summit in the Ise-Shima area. I sincerely hope that he will take the opportunity to do so.

Concerns about the threat of nuclear proliferation have continued to escalate within the international community this year, especially in view of North Korea's resumption of an active nuclear test program.

Indeed, it is time for renewed efforts to map the path to a world free from nuclear weapons and to take concrete action to that end. Regrettably, last year's Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference closed without reaching consensus, but nevertheless there have been signs of new developments.

The nuclear-weapons states and their allies continue to assert that they have no choice but to maintain a nuclear deterrent so long as these weapons exist. But the truth is that proliferation and other threats constantly generate conditions that could result in accidental detonation or launch.

Any use of nuclear weapons in a hostile exchange would produce unimaginable consequences — both in terms of the number of lives lost and the number of people who would suffer from the aftereffects. And, of course, the use of any of the world's arsenal of 15,000 nuclear weapons could undo in an instant all of humankind's efforts to resolve global problems.

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), whose target date was 2015, encouraged meaningful efforts in such fields as reducing poverty and improving public health and hygiene. This work will be carried on through the follow-up framework, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which were adopted last year. The existence of nuclear weapons threatens to negate all of these life-saving measures.

Even if we are able to avoid the actual use of nuclear weapons, maintaining and modernizing them will ensure that the global inequalities afflicting human society are passed on as a burden to future generations.

Right now, the second session of the Open-ended Working Group (OEWG) to move multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations forward is being convened at the U.N. Office at Geneva.

Importantly, the statement recently adopted at the Hiroshima meeting of foreign ministers of the G-7 countries — a group that includes three nuclear weapons states — made reference to the OEWG, expressing the hope that through “balanced, constructive dialogue” it could encourage future cooperation between nuclear-weapons and non-nuclear-weapons states.

I strongly hope that the OEWG will indeed engage in constructive deliberations to identify effective measures needed for “the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons,” its mandate as defined by the U.N. General Assembly. It is vital that these meetings lead to the start of negotiations that conclude in a treaty prohibiting nuclear weapons.

One immediate step forward would be the entry into force of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), first signed some 20 years ago. Its entry into force requires that the remaining eight specified states ratify the treaty, and this would create the conditions for a world forever free from nuclear weapons testing.

Last year, in a statement delivered at the NPT Review Conference, the representative of South Africa urged: “Nuclear disarmament is not only an international legal obligation, but also a moral and ethical imperative.” These words give voice to the feelings shared by all people who seek peace.

At the start of the current session of the OEWG, the Soka Gakkai International joined with the representatives of other religions in issuing a statement, “Faith Communities Concerned about the Humanitarian Consequences of Nuclear Weapons.” It reads in part: “Nuclear weapons are incompatible with the values upheld by our respective faith traditions — the right of people to live in security and dignity; the commands of conscience and justice; the duty to protect the vulnerable and to exercise the stewardship that will safeguard the planet for future generations.”

Today, many countries have started to advance toward the shared goal of a world free from nuclear weapons. What is needed now is to breathe new energizing life into that vision, and to construct a new and powerful momentum of collaborative action.

The question of nuclear weapons cannot remain one debated solely among governments. The many individuals committed to peace who make up global civil society must raise our voices. We

must express our unyielding determination to move forward the processes that will finally bring about the prohibition and abolition of these weapons of mass slaughter.

Daisaku Ikeda is president of the Soka Gakkai International Buddhist association and founder of the Toda Institute for Global Peace and Policy Research.

Japan and US nuclear deterrent

May 12, 2016

Divided interests: Japan needs U.S. nuclear deterrent

<http://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20160512/p2a/00m/0na/019000c>

"President Barack Obama's visit will have an enormous impact to turn the world toward an end to nuclear weapons by touching on the reality of the atomic bombings, and having those thoughts transmitted around the world."

- **【Related】** Kerry, Kennedy paved the way for Obama's Hiroshima visit
- **【Related】** Obama has no plan for major speech in Hiroshima: White House
- **【Related】** Editorial: Obama's decision to visit Hiroshima laudable

That is how Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, speaking at a May 10 news conference, described the significance of U.S. President Barack Obama's announced visit to Hiroshima later this month.

The Japanese government certainly welcomes the presidential visit, but that does not mean it welcomes a world without nuclear weapons with open arms. This is because Japan, though it is the only country ever subjected to nuclear attack and continues to promote the elimination of atomic weapons, views it as extremely important to stay under the U.S. nuclear umbrella, particularly as North Korea develops nuclear bombs and China modernizes its own atomic arsenal.

The security environment around Japan is becoming increasingly severe. North Korea is working on building bombs small enough to fit on missiles. In its March report on the security situation in East Asia, Japan's National Institute for Defense Studies stated, "The possibility that North Korea succeeded in miniaturizing its atomic weapons and building missile warheads has been pointed out." North Korea is thought to have 200 Nodong ballistic missiles, which could carry a nuclear warhead and can reach Japan. It is simply a fact that Japan is increasingly dependent on the U.S. nuclear deterrent.

President Obama made eliminating nuclear arms one of his campaign promises back in 2008, and he undertook a reappraisal of U.S. nuclear policy in his first year in office. During this review, the U.S. decided to scrap its nuclear-tipped Tomahawk cruise missiles. The move prompted worries in Tokyo that it would "affect deterrence in regards to North Korea." There were also some in Japan who voiced concerns about the realism of switching from a nuclear to conventional deterrent.

The U.S. sensed this discomfiture, and made absolutely clear at a bilateral defense conference that the American nuclear umbrella extended over Japan. The Obama administration's "Nuclear Posture Review" released in April 2010 also continued the nuclear deterrent theory, and did not include the president's desired "no first use" principle.

"How does the nuclear umbrella function? The U.S. built trust with Japan and South Korea on this question through lengthy discussions," observes Japan Institute of International Affairs chief researcher Hirofumi Tosaki. On Obama's Hiroshima visit, Tosaki told the Mainichi Shimbun, "It will be a symbolic message (to the world) coming from a country that used nuclear arms and a country subjected to such weapons, particularly as the nuclear powers are showing so little enthusiasm for disarmament." However, "as long as China, Russia and North Korea lean on atomic weapons, the U.S. cannot give them up. It's unlikely Obama's Hiroshima visit will alter the disarmament landscape," he added. How the presidential trip to Hiroshima will impact nuclear policy, if at all, remains to be seen. This question will remain a task for both the Japanese and U.S. governments long after Obama has returned home.

Unspeakable acts

May 17, 2016

Hiroshima and Nagasaki: You can't apologize for some things

http://nf2045.blogspot.fr/2016/05/hiroshima-and-nagasaki-you-cant.html?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Feed:+NuclearFreeBy2045+%28Nuclear+Free+by+2045?%29

-Remember who you're talking to. Master of the S.S. Samaritan... whose hands—these very hands—flung seven German officers into her fiery furnace.
-You did not.
-One after the other, kicking and squealing.
-The tale gets taller each time he tells it. Geoffrey, you know very well you didn't. The British Navy doesn't give medals to murderers.
-Well, I might have done it. I was the commanding officer responsible. You can't apologize for some things. The past fills up quicker than we know.

Under the Volcano (film dialog)

by Malcolm Lowry

The news has just come over that for the first time a sitting president of the United States will visit Hiroshima. This has provoked the question (and the fear of many Americans) of whether Barack Obama will apologize for the dropping of atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

A poll showed that the majority of Americans see no need for Obama to apologize, but it is impossible to know what this means. Many of the people who feel this way obviously hold onto the belief that the bombs shortened the war or saved lives, or other such myths, while others might also believe that the attacks were a crime against humanity, but they just don't see how an apology would serve any useful purpose.

In Malcom Lowry's novel *Under the Volcano*, the protagonist Geoffrey Firmin declares emphatically, "You can't apologize for some things. The past fills up quicker than we know." This is what he says about his

guilt for having been commanding officer of a British ship on which seven German prisoners were flung into the ship's furnace. Although his conscience was haunted and it fueled his fatal alcoholism, he could find no way to apologize. Any apology would sound hollow or incomplete, and its sincerity would always be suspect. Perhaps this is why some Americans feel no apology should be made. You can apologize when you bump into a stranger, but for Hiroshima? Where would one begin, and when would one finish? The best we can hope for at this stage is that we finally learn how to have an honest conversation about what the historical record has made clear. The need for post-hoc rationalizations will hopefully recede into the past. Below is a list of some of points that President Obama could acknowledge in Hiroshima, if he wants to make progress in his quest for a world free of nuclear weapons.

1. The project to build the bombs was itself a recklessness endangerment of the people who made the bomb, as well as the land, flora, and fauna of *America*, and later the world.
2. The bomb was recklessly developed before anyone fully understood DNA and the biological mechanisms that are harmed by radiation, before anyone understood how the nuclear age would impact all life henceforth.
3. One of the purposes in dropping the bombs was to achieve a dominant position in the world order that would come after WWII.
4. Peaceful alternatives were not pursued. A negotiated surrender was possible. President Truman used the bomb too hastily after it had been tested.
5. The entry of the Soviet Union into the war was a major consideration leading to Japan's decision to surrender.
6. President Truman and his advisors did not listen to scientists and high ranking military commanders who advised against using the bomb on both moral and practical grounds.
7. The atomic bombings were clearly war crimes under the laws of the day.
8. The bombs were used partly because the Manhattan Project had too much bureaucratic inertia. No one had a plan for how atom bombs should or should not be used. Leslie Groves, the military leader in charge of the Manhattan Project pressured his scientists to finish the bomb out of a fear that the war would end before it was ready or the Soviets would "get in on the kill." He and others in the government feared the political fallout of not using the products of such a costly military program.
9. The American public and intellectual class went to great lengths to lie about and rationalize the decision to use the atomic bombs.
10. After the bombs were created, insufficient effort was made to avoid an arms race before it escalated out of control.

Admitting all of this would be better than any official apology that would only invite a counter-productive, heated reaction from American nationalists. But the main reason is you just can't apologize for some things, and this doesn't mean the perpetrator is unaware of or unburdened by what he has done. It's a mistake to expect an apology for such a colossal act of murder. There is a reason such things are called *unspeakable* acts, and I suspect the Japanese know this. They have decided that there is a distant goal more worthy than the selfish satisfaction of hearing an apology. If president Obama prefers, he could refer to the historical record as "mistakes" or "tragic alternatives not taken," or whatever he wants to call them. He could even use that word that Japanese officials love to use whenever sorry seems to be the hardest word in a conversation about the Japanese Empire. It's all just so damn *regrettable* (*ikan'na* 遺憾な), isn't it? Let's just leave it at that. President Obama would do the world a service if he would just set the record

straight once and for all, and maybe show some appreciation for the historians who have stood up to the fake controversy and rationalizations for the last seventy years.

Other views:

Gar Alperovitz, “We didn’t need to drop the bomb — and even our WW II military icons knew it,” *Salon*, May 12, 2016.

President Obama will finally visit Hiroshima. Moral leadership suggests both sides apologize for unspeakable acts.

Jack Mirkinson, “America’s enduring Hiroshima shame: Why Barack Obama should apologize for the atomic bomb — but won’t,” *Salon*, May 12, 2016.

Obama will become the first sitting president to ever visit the site of one of America’s greatest crimes.

Apologise?

May 15, 2016

Rather than apologize, Obama should vow to halve the U.S. nuclear stockpile

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/community/2016/05/15/voices/rather-apologize-obama-vow-halve-u-s-nuclear-stockpile/#.Vzl3V-Rdeot>

by Patrick Parr

May 15, 2016

“If we are to avoid the drudgery of war, if we are to avoid being plunged across the abyss of atomic destruction, we must transcend the narrow confines of nationalism. Nationalism must give way to internationalism.” — Martin Luther King Jr., July 19, 1953

As of 2015, the United States and Russia have control of approximately 93 percent of all nuclear weapons. This staggering statistic is the legacy of the decades-long period of paranoia known as the Cold War. In the United States, a country far more transparent about its stocks than Russia, nuclear weapons are divided into three categories: 2,080 deployed, 2,680 in storage and 2,340 that are “retired” — an odd way of saying they are simply in line to be dismantled. One missile blows up Manhattan, Tokyo’s Setagaya Ward or Higashiosaka, to put those numbers in perspective.

When Barack Obama visits the Hiroshima Peace Memorial during his fourth and final visit to Japan as president of the United States, simply saying “I’m sorry” would, in actuality, create more harm than good. The most likely Republican presidential candidate, Donald Trump, will seize on this “weakness of patriotism” and once again state to his supporters that America is a “loser” who travels the world apologizing for its past victories. And many Americans far less attuned to the frequency of the world will nod their head in agreement: “What good does apologizing do? Nothing.” (Note: The White House press secretary has already publicly stated that Obama would not be apologizing.)

Obama is, of course, entirely aware of the potential backlash. Election years have a way of turning America into a land of hysteria. Everything is amplified, and the country divides itself into red and blue states like sports teams in pursuit of a championship.

The truth is that, throughout his life, Obama has been more closely associated with Japanese culture than any other American president in history. In his first memoir, “Dreams from my Father,” written long before his presidency, Obama described a trip he took as a young boy: “On a three-day stopover in Japan, we walked through bone-chilling rains to see the great bronze Buddha at Kamakura and ate green tea ice cream on a ferry that passed through high mountain lakes.” Also frequently mentioned is his Asian upbringing: four years spent in Indonesia and the rest of his childhood in the predominantly Asian neighborhood of Makiki in Honolulu.

As the success of the organization Mayors for Peace has demonstrated, there is a global call to achieve a nuclear-free world by the year 2020. Since 1982, over 7,000 cities (including over 200 in the United States) have become members of the organization. For Obama, acknowledging this effort would have 10 times more effect than a 71-years-late apology. Obama could even guarantee a 50 percent reduction in nuclear weapons before the next president takes over.

When pressed about this issue of disarmament, Obama often delivers this line, paraphrased: “We are working on dismantling our nuclear weapons supply, *in cooperation with Russia*.” Those last four words are the most important, because Russia has hardly ever been cooperative on this matter. If they refuse to even provide a sharp estimate of how many nuclear weapons they possess, how will they ever cooperate on such a complex process as disarmament?

A promised act by Obama, at this late stage, would be far more valuable than a simple apology. However, there should never be the expectation of Obama publicly demanding a nuclear-free world. As an American, Obama believes in the current power structure: “The integration of Germany and Japan into a world system of liberal democracies and free-market economies effectively eliminated the threat of great-power conflicts inside the free world,” Obama wrote in his second memoir, “The Audacity of Hope” (written far more with the presidency in mind). “It is our nuclear umbrella that prevented Europe and Japan from entering the arms race during the Cold War, and that — until recently, at least — has led most countries to conclude that nukes aren’t worth the trouble.”

Still, what remains is that egregious, gaudy number: 7,000, a number that other unarmed countries see as a slap in the face. “There they are, with seven *thousand*, and we haven’t but one!”

Cutting that number in half within the year would be a strong way of displaying a level of cooperation and *respect* toward other countries not in such a favorable position of authority. It would be better than an apology. It would be action. Or, as Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., one of Obama’s heroes, put it: “When will a stupid world rise up to see that a ‘get tough’ policy cannot bring peace; universal military training cannot bring peace; the threat of the atomic bomb cannot bring peace; but only through placing love, mercy and justice first can we have peace.”

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Secret agreement unearthed

May 16, 2016

US had rights to bring nuclear weapons to Okinawa

http://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20160515_16/

The US Defense Department has published a document that confirms the existence of a once-secret agreement with Japan.

It shows that the US was given the right to bring nuclear arms to Okinawa in time of crisis, even after its reversion to Japanese rule.

The document describes events from 1969 to 1973 when Melvin Laird was Secretary of Defense. It includes details of the lead up to Okinawa's reversion.

The document says the United States would hand back control of Okinawa "in a manner consistent with" the Japanese policy of banning the presence of nuclear weapons on Japanese soil, but it retained the right to reintroduce them in time of crisis.

A document of the secret agreement, signed by the leaders of the 2 countries, came to light 7 years ago. It had been kept by relatives of the then-Prime Minister Eisaku Sato.

The Japanese government set up a committee to investigate the agreement.

The committee found no evidence that the document was passed on to succeeding administrations. It said this meant the document cannot necessarily be called a "secret agreement".

Waseda University Professor Mikio Haruna, an expert in Japan-US relations and a member of the committee, says this may be the first time the agreement has been released in an official document.

He says **it may not necessarily represent the view of the US government as a whole, but the Defense Department may be hoping to indicate that the US could bring nuclear weapons to Japan, at a time when tensions are rising in East Asia.**

Is Japan serious about ridding the world of nuclear weapons?

May 22, 2016

UN Nuclear disarmament talks

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2016/05/22/editorials/u-n-nuclear-disarmament-talks/#.V0HUBeRdeot>

The United Nations open-ended working group on nuclear disarmament held its second session this month in Geneva, following its first gathering in February. **What emerged from the latest meeting is a schism between countries seeking to create a treaty prohibiting nuclear weapons and those nations**

opposed to the idea, including nuclear weapons powers and those states relying on the protection of a nuclear umbrella.

While the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty recognizes five countries — the United States, Russia, Britain, France and China — as nuclear weapons states, it requires all parties to the treaty to pursue negotiations to achieve nuclear disarmament. Given the potential dangers posed by the accidental use of nuclear arms and nuclear terrorism, all states should support the effort to ban nuclear weapons.

The undercurrent of discussions in the working group's meetings is the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons. The consequences of a nuclear explosion would spread beyond national borders and have regional and global effects. It would indiscriminately kill or injure numerous civilians. Radioactive contamination would devastate the environment for generations, causing cancer and other deadly diseases. No nations would have the capability to adequately respond to the human suffering caused by nuclear weapons.

This aspect of nuclear weapons has raised concerns among many non-nuclear weapons states and civil society groups and led to the holding of three international conferences — in Norway in 2013 and Mexico and Austria in 2014 — to discuss the humanitarian consequences of nuclear arms. The discussions at these conferences served as the basis for the talks in the latest meeting in Geneva.

The Humanitarian Pledge, issued at the 2014 Vienna conference and endorsed by 127 states, calls for filling the “legal gap” in which nuclear arms are the only weapons of mass destruction that have not been explicitly banned by a treaty. The failure of the 2015 NPT review conference to adopt a final document also increased the concerns of non-nuclear weapons states over the lack of progress being made toward achieving nuclear disarmament. This situation has given birth to a movement to legally ban nuclear weapons on grounds of the humanitarian consequences of their use.

What is disappointing is that none of the five nuclear weapons states under the NPT and none of the four other nations that possess nuclear arms — India, Pakistan, Israel and North Korea — took part in the working group. The five nuclear weapons states maintain the position that nuclear arms play a role in the sphere of security and that parties calling for a ban on these weapons ignore that role's significance. Those states' seeming indifference to the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons has prompted the formation of a majority opinion that discussions should be initiated on a legal framework to prohibit nuclear arms even if the nuclear weapons powers refuse to join the talks. At the Geneva meeting, 10 countries — Brazil, Mexico, Argentina, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Zambia — proposed that a conference be convened in 2017 to negotiate a legally binding instrument and that progress on the negotiations be reported to the U.N. high-level international conference on nuclear disarmament.

The nuclear weapons states need to realize that frustration and dissatisfaction are building over their unwillingness to abandon nuclear deterrence and start a process of disarmament as mandated by the NPT. There are more than 15,000 nuclear warheads worldwide and more than 1,500 of these are deployed for possible use at any time. The risk of human error or hackers triggering accidental or unauthorized use of nuclear arms and the danger of terrorist attacks utilizing radioactive materials cannot be eliminated. In addition, since nuclear deterrence entails preparing for nuclear warfare, the risk of nuclear arms being used cannot be eliminated. Therefore nuclear weapons powers should change their thinking.

Many nuclear umbrella states, including Japan, attended the Geneva meeting. Efforts by Japan — the only country to suffer nuclear attacks — to bridge the gap between nuclear weapons powers and non-nuclear weapons states produced no tangible results. In deference to the U.S. position, Japan takes a negative view toward the proposal to begin negotiations on a treaty banning nuclear weapons, stating that such moves

could divide nuclear weapons and non-nuclear weapons states. Other nuclear umbrella states including NATO members, Australia and South Korea took a similar position.

Japan instead called for a “progressive approach” that entails a gradual reduction of nuclear weapons while heeding their security role. **Japanese officials should realize that the nation’s position of calling for the abolition of nuclear weapons while accepting the nuclear deterrent theory and relying on America’s nuclear umbrella is contradictory and undermines its persuasive power.** If Japan is truly serious about ridding the world of nuclear weapons, it should formulate a long-term security policy that doesn’t rely on them.

Time for action

May 25, 2016

US nuclear disarmament leader calls for action

http://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20160525_09/

The head of a US anti-nuclear arms group says he hopes President Barack Obama will take concrete actions toward nuclear disarmament following his visit to the atomic-bombed city of Hiroshima later this week.

Ploughshares Fund President Joseph Cirincione made the remark in an interview with NHK.

Cirincione is also a member of Secretary of State John Kerry's International Security Advisory Board, and served as an advisor on nuclear disarmament in Obama's 2008 presidential campaign.

Cirincione said he believes Obama will use his upcoming visit to Hiroshima as an opportunity to draw attention to the horrors caused by even one nuclear weapon.

He noted that today's weapons are 10 to 50 times more powerful than the one that devastated Hiroshima in 1945.

Cirincione said he believes visiting Hiroshima and hearing the words of survivors could influence the President. He said the game is not over yet, and expressed the hope that Obama will take fresh actions during his remaining time of office to realize a world without nuclear weapons.

Cirincione noted that Obama should cut the number of US strategic nuclear warheads regardless of progress in negotiations with Russia. He also said Obama should suspend a plan to spend about 1 trillion dollars over the next 30 years to modernize the US nuclear arsenal.

Cirincione said Japan should do more to urge the US to reduce its nuclear stockpile.

He said some Americans who attach importance to the concept of nuclear deterrence say the US needs a

large nuclear umbrella to protect Japan. But he insisted that the US could do so with a much smaller umbrella.

Obama visit to Hiroshima

May 26, 2016

Hiroshima visit highlights risks of nuclear weapons

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2016/05/26/commentary/japan-commentary/hiroshima-visit-highlights-risks-nuclear-weapons/#.V0f2m-Rdeov>

by Tadateru Konoe

U.S. President Barack Obama's historic visit to Hiroshima must give fresh impetus to efforts to rid the world of nuclear weapons. Amid today's increasingly fraught international political climate, the risks are getting higher. States must take urgent action to safeguard all our futures.

We now know more than ever the dangers of an accidental or deliberate detonation of a nuclear weapon. We also realize that there can be no adequate humanitarian response to such a nightmare scenario. If functions, mishaps, false alarms and misinterpreted information have nearly led to the intentional or accidental detonation of nuclear weapons on numerous occasions since 1945, according to testimonies by experts and former nuclear force officers. In the past two years alone, the organization Global Zero has documented scores of "military incidents" involving nuclear weapons states and their allies, alongside the increasing risks stemming from cyberattacks.

Put this together with recent insight into the appalling long-term health impact of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki explosions themselves, and the sheer human cost of any future nuclear bomb blast, and you have a truly alarming picture.

We were in Hiroshima and Nagasaki last year, speaking to survivors, or hibakusha, as they are known. More than 70 years on, their lives, and the lives of countless people in Japan, are still overshadowed by these two watershed events in the history of modern warfare.

After the atomic blasts, Red Cross staff struggled in unimaginable conditions to relieve the suffering. With hospitals reduced to rubble and ash, and medical supplies contaminated, the provision of even basic health care was well nigh impossible.

But the nightmare is far from over even today.

Doctors at the Japanese Red Cross Society hospitals in Hiroshima and Nagasaki say that some two-thirds of the deaths among elderly hibakusha are probably from radiation-related cancers. And aside from the physical symptoms, the psychological trauma is still ever present.

No one who visits Hiroshima's Peace Memorial Museum, or who sees the continued suffering of thousands of elderly survivors, can be in any doubt of the catastrophic and irreversible effects of nuclear weapons.

Nor could they in good conscience argue that these weapons somehow act as guarantors of global security or protectors of humanity as a whole.

Of course, the bombs in the arsenals of nuclear-armed states today are far more powerful and destructive. And modern research only makes the case against them stronger. Studies suggest that the use of nuclear weapons now even on a limited scale would have disastrous and long-lasting consequences on human health, the environment, the climate, food production and socioeconomic development.

Health problems would span generations, with children of survivors facing significant risks from the genetic damage inflicted on their parents.

Seventy years after the dawn of the “nuclear age,” there may be no effective or feasible means of assisting a substantial portion of survivors in the immediate wake of a nuclear detonation.

And make no mistake. The devastation of a future bomb will show no respect for national borders. It is likely to ravage societies far beyond its intended target country. Which makes the continued existence of nuclear weapons and the risk that entails a global concern.

Faced with these conclusions, you might imagine that the international community would pull back from the brink of potential tragedy and take steps to eradicate these weapons.

Sadly, last year’s review conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which had the opportunity to advance disarmament, failed to do so.

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement has called on states to negotiate an international agreement to prohibit the use of and completely eliminate nuclear weapons within a binding timetable.

We reiterate that call today. The political will to rid the world of this menace must urgently be found.

Until the last nuclear weapon is eliminated, there are essential steps that nuclear states can and must take now to diminish the danger of another Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

It is imperative that these states and their allies reduce the role of nuclear weapons in their military plans, doctrines and policies, and cut the number of nuclear warheads on high-alert status. The current modernization and proliferation of nuclear arsenals is leading us toward potential catastrophe.

The horror of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the human suffering inflicted still hold powerful lessons.

Obama’s landmark visit will surely be a powerful reminder of the terrible destruction that nuclear weapons wreak.

We must act on this reminder.

To truly pay homage to those whose lives were lost or irrevocably altered by the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings, Obama’s visit must galvanize the international community to move without delay toward a world free of nuclear weapons.

The fact that these weapons have not been used over the past 70 years does not guarantee a risk-free future for our children. Only the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons can do that.

Idealism & pragmatism

May 27, 2016

COMMENTARY/ Nuke-free goal a struggle between idealism and pragmatism

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201605270043.html>

By TAKESHI YAMAWAKI/ American General Bureau Chief of The Asahi Shimbun

Despite the constraints placed upon him, U.S. President Barack Obama pushed his nuclear-free ideal while remaining pragmatic in his written responses to an exclusive interview with The Asahi Shimbun (<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201605270001.html>).

In explaining the reasoning behind his decision to become the first sitting U.S. president to visit Hiroshima, Obama did not dwell on the appropriateness of dropping the atomic bomb on the city in western Japan in 1945.

And instead of focusing solely on the atomic bomb victims, he said he would “remember and honor the tens of millions of lives lost during the Second World War.”

The choice of visiting Hiroshima was because it “reminds us that war, no matter the cause, results in tremendous suffering and loss, especially for innocent citizens.”

Within the context of describing the horrors of war, Obama also reiterated his continued pursuit of a nuclear-free world, a goal he first laid out in a speech in Prague in 2009.

There is still strong sentiment in the United States that the dropping of the atomic bombs was necessary for ending World War II.

Moreover, as commander in chief of a nuclear power, Obama is in no position to acknowledge the inhumanity of nuclear weapons.

Still, Obama appears to have tried his best to once again raise an ideal he holds.

At the same time, Obama is a pragmatist.

His administration has set aside budgetary outlays to modernize the U.S. nuclear arsenal from the standpoint of strengthening its deterrent force.

Criticism has been raised in the United States that such action contradicts Obama’s ideal of abolishing nuclear weapons.

A number of people are disturbed by the gap between the lofty idealism and actual course taken by the Obama administration.

After a bilateral meeting with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe on May 25, Obama attended a joint news conference at which he said “it is still going to be a dangerous world” and there will be times when the U.S. military will have to be deployed.

But Obama also emphasized that “war involves suffering and we should always do what we can to prevent it.”

That comment shows that a pragmatic approach is necessary in the process of reaching one’s ideals.

In his written responses, Obama raised the nuclear threat from North Korea, through its repeated nuclear tests, as being the most difficult hurdle to achieving a nuclear-free world.

The response gives the impression that Obama believes it is important to strengthen deterrence and defense capabilities. At the same time, it can be read as a message calling on Japan and South Korea to overcome historical differences to work together along with the United States to deal with North Korea.

What is clear is that Obama will visit Hiroshima on May 27 as another step toward achieving his ideal of a nuclear-free world while being well aware of the criticism that it may provoke.

The “reconciliation” achieved by two nations that were once engaged in a tragic war is certainly a positive accomplishment. But pragmatism also means that Japan in the future will be faced with a number of difficult issues, such as how to narrow the differences between nuclear powers and non-nuclear powers in seeking an abolition of nuclear weapons as well as the extent to which neighboring nations can cooperate to achieve the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

Not just weapons

May 27, 2016

VOX POPULI: Let Obama's visit spark debate on nuclear power, not just weapons

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201605270041.html>

A group of Kyoto University students held an "A-bomb exhibition" in various parts of Japan in 1951, according to Tetsuo Obata's book "Senryoka no 'Genbakuten'" ("A-Bomb exhibition" in Occupied Japan). At that time, any information concerning the bombs that were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945 was strictly suppressed by the General Headquarters of the Allied Forces.

The students were obstructed by Japanese law enforcement authorities, but still managed to show the public the extent of the A-bomb damage for the first time.

The exhibits included photos of keloidal scars and other forms of radiation damage as well as a series of paintings from "Genbaku no Zu" (The Hiroshima Panels) by Iri Maruki and his wife, Toshi. The paintings depict the immediate aftermath of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings, such as people with their skin hanging off.

At the exhibition, the students hung a panel with this message: "Liberate the fire of Prometheus from the A-bombs and transform it into a new flame of peace and happiness of the human race!"

It was their hope that nuclear power would become a gift for humanity, just as Prometheus in Greek mythology stole fire from Mount Olympus and gave it to mankind.

Thus, postwar Japan proceeded with the construction of nuclear power plants in the name of "peaceful utilization of nuclear energy."

Not only did the harrowing A-bomb experiences fail to deter Japan from relying on nuclear power generation, the experiences actually led to Japan embracing nuclear power generation.

U.S. President Barack Obama is visiting Hiroshima on May 27. I hope this will become a day for everyone to think about the utter inhumanity of nuclear weapons and how they can be eliminated.

But having experienced the Fukushima disaster, Japan cannot ignore the potential horrors of another nuclear plant accident.

A poem by Masao Ishii goes to the effect: "I don't know how to treat A-bomb victims/ There is no medicine, and I feel helpless." This piece expresses the writer's feeling of profound regret at not being able to do anything for people who have been exposed to radiation.

This poem could actually apply to Japan itself, which is still struggling in vain to bring the consequences of the Fukushima disaster under control.

The dismantling of nuclear reactors is not proceeding smoothly, and many evacuees are still unable to return home.

Obama's visit to Hiroshima is unlikely to start many conversations on nuclear power generation, but that is exactly why we must talk and think about it.

--The Asahi Shimbun, May 27

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Vox Populi, Vox Dei is a popular daily column that takes up a wide range of topics, including culture, arts and social trends and developments. Written by veteran Asahi Shimbun writers, the column provides useful perspectives on and insights into contemporary Japan and its culture.

Message from Hiroshima

May 30, 2016

Headlines from the Future: Message from Hiroshima

http://nf2045.blogspot.fr/2016/05/headlines-from-future-message-from.html?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Feed:+NuclearFreeBy2045+%28Nuclear+Free+by+2045?%29

A recent discovery is shedding light on the century of relative peace that prevailed after the first atomic weapon was used. The document that was recently found on a small memory drive buried in layers of rubble may tell us something about the intellectual climate that prevailed in the years leading up to the great cataclysm. The document is concerned with the atomic attack on Hiroshima and the subsequent hopes to live in a world without nuclear weapons. It seems to have been delivered in Hiroshima as a speech at some time after the atomic bomb was dropped on the city in 1945. However, according to archaeologists who are analyzing the text, there is a frustrating lack of clues as to who wrote these words, and there is a conspicuous, seemingly deliberate avoidance of reference to specific historical figures, events, nations and contentious ideas about how realize the goal of a nuclear-free world. One historian noted:

Aspirational essays and speeches like this began to appear within months of the bombing in August 1945, so it could have been any time over the next century. These documents were remarkable for the degree to which eloquence was combined with boilerplate, vapid, aspirational drivel that managed to refer to no actual events or serious approaches for resolving the problem under discussion. As far as this new discovery is concerned, we would love to know who spoke these words and when. For now, it at least seems to shed light on the declining culture that led to the global upheaval. Several theories are bouncing around. References in the text tell us the speaker was American, and the mention of the “genetic code” suggest it dates to the 1950s when DNA was first understood. Some believe it was authored by a beauty pageant contestant, or a high school student in a speech competition. It may have been such a person, someone who would have had little knowledge about current events, only a vague knowledge of the outline of world history, and definitely not any critical awareness of it. Another less likely theory is that it was delivered by a highly placed political figure who was painfully constrained by several factors such as public opinion, power projected through dominant bureaucracies and financial interests, as well as his or her own cognitive dissonance—the gap between long-ago stated goals and the actual record of achievement.

The newly discovered text follows:

... years ago, on a bright cloudless morning, death fell from the sky and the world was changed. A flash of light and a wall of fire destroyed a city and demonstrated that mankind possessed the means to destroy itself.

Why do we come to this place, to Hiroshima? We come to ponder a terrible force unleashed in a not-so-distant past. We come to mourn the dead, including over 100,000 Japanese men, women and children, thousands of Koreans, a dozen Americans held prisoner.

Their souls speak to us. They ask us to look inward, to take stock of who we are and what we might become.

It is not the fact of war that sets Hiroshima apart. Artifacts tell us that violent conflict appeared with the very first man. Our early ancestors having learned to make blades from flint and spears from wood used these tools not just for hunting but against their own kind. On every continent, the history of civilization is filled with war, whether driven by scarcity of grain or hunger for gold, compelled by nationalist fervor or religious zeal. Empires have risen and fallen. Peoples have been subjugated and liberated. And at each juncture, innocents have suffered, a countless toll, their names forgotten by time.

The world war that reached its brutal end in Hiroshima and Nagasaki was fought among the wealthiest and most powerful of nations. Their civilizations had given the world great cities and magnificent art. Their thinkers had advanced ideas of justice and harmony and truth. And yet the war grew out of the same base instinct for domination or conquest that had caused conflicts among the simplest tribes, an old pattern amplified by new capabilities and without new constraints.

In the span of a few years, some 60 million people would die. Men, women, children, no different than us. Shot, beaten, marched, bombed, jailed, starved, gassed to death. There are many sites around the world that chronicle this war, memorials that tell stories of courage and heroism, graves and empty camps that echo of unspeakable depravity.

Yet in the image of a mushroom cloud that rose into these skies, we are most starkly reminded of humanity's core contradiction. How the very spark that marks us as a species, our thoughts, our imagination, our language, our toolmaking, our ability to set ourselves apart from nature and bend it to our will — those very things also give us the capacity for unmatched destruction.

How often does material advancement or social innovation blind us to this truth? How easily we learn to justify violence in the name of some higher cause.

Every great religion promises a pathway to love and peace and righteousness, and yet no religion has been spared from believers who have claimed their faith as a license to kill.

Nations arise telling a story that binds people together in sacrifice and cooperation, allowing for remarkable feats. But those same stories have so often been used to oppress and dehumanize those who are different.

Science allows us to communicate across the seas and fly above the clouds, to cure disease and understand the cosmos, but those same discoveries can be turned into ever more efficient killing machines.

The wars of the modern age teach us this truth. Hiroshima teaches this truth. Technological progress without an equivalent progress in human institutions can doom us. The scientific revolution that led to the splitting of an atom requires a moral revolution as well.

That is why we come to this place. We stand here in the middle of this city and force ourselves to imagine the moment the bomb fell. We force ourselves to feel the dread of children confused by what they see. We listen to a silent cry. We remember all the innocents killed across the arc of that terrible war and the wars that came before and the wars that would follow.

Mere words cannot give voice to such suffering. But we have a shared responsibility to look directly into the eye of history and ask what we must do differently to curb such suffering again.

Someday, the voices of the hibakusha will no longer be with us to bear witness. But the memory of the morning of Aug. 6, 1945, must never fade. That memory allows us to fight complacency. It fuels our moral imagination. It allows us to change.

And since that fateful day, we have made choices that give us hope. The United States and Japan have forged not only an alliance but a friendship that has won far more for our people than we could ever claim through war. The nations of Europe built a union that replaced battlefields with bonds of commerce and democracy. Oppressed people and nations won liberation. An international community established institutions and treaties that work to avoid war and aspire to restrict and roll back and ultimately eliminate the existence of nuclear weapons.

Still, every act of aggression between nations, every act of terror and corruption and cruelty and oppression that we see around the world shows our work is never done. We may not be able to eliminate man's capacity to do evil, so nations and the alliances that we form must possess the means to defend ourselves. But among those nations like my own that hold nuclear stockpiles, we must have the courage to escape the logic of fear and pursue a world without them.

We may not realize this goal in my lifetime, but persistent effort can roll back the possibility of catastrophe. We can chart a course that leads to the destruction of these stockpiles. We can stop the spread to new nations and secure deadly materials from fanatics.

And yet that is not enough. For we see around the world today how even the crudest rifles and barrel bombs can serve up violence on a terrible scale. We must change our mind-set about war itself. To prevent conflict through diplomacy and strive to end conflicts after they've begun. To see our growing interdependence as a cause for peaceful cooperation and not violent competition. To define our nations not by our capacity to destroy but by what we build. And perhaps, above all, we must reimagine our connection to one another as members of one human race.

For this, too, is what makes our species unique. We're not bound by genetic code to repeat the mistakes of the past. We can learn. We can choose. We can tell our children a different story, one that describes a common humanity, one that makes war less likely and cruelty less easily accepted.

We see these stories in the hibakusha. The woman who forgave a pilot who flew the plane that dropped the atomic bomb because she recognized that what she really hated was war itself. The man who sought out families of Americans killed here because he believed their loss was equal to his own.

My own nation's story began with simple words: All men are created equal and endowed by our creator with certain unalienable rights including life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Realizing that ideal has never been easy, even within our own borders, even among our own citizens. But staying true to that story is worth the effort. It is an ideal to be strived for, an ideal that extends across continents and across oceans. The irreducible worth of every person, the insistence that every life is precious, the radical and necessary notion that we are part of a single human family — that is the story that we all must tell.

That is why we come to Hiroshima. So that we might think of people we love. The first smile from our children in the morning. The gentle touch from a spouse over the kitchen table. The comforting embrace of a parent. We can think of those things and know that those same precious moments took place here... years ago.

Those who died, they are like us. Ordinary people understand this, I think. They do not want more war. They would rather that the wonders of science be focused on improving life and not eliminating it. When the choices made by nations, when the choices made by leaders, reflect this simple wisdom, then the lesson of Hiroshima is done.

The world was forever changed here, but today the children of this city will go through their day in peace. What a precious thing that is. It is worth protecting, and then extending to every child. That is a future we can choose, a future in which Hiroshima and Nagasaki are known not as the dawn of atomic warfare but as the start of our own moral awakening.

If you've read this far, the jig is up. You know this is the Hiroshima Statement read by US President Barack Obama on May 27, 2016. For the sake of setting up the satire, I deleted the two references to "seventy-one years ago." Other than these two indications in the original, the point made here remains. This long statement is stripped of context and importance. It says nothing of substance about nuclear disarmament. The best thing to come out of the president's visit is the fact that Hiroshima and Nagasaki received so much attention from the world media and the visit provoked many writers to make excellent analyses that were infinitely better than the statement delivered in Hiroshima Peace Park:

Adam Taylor, "It's not just Hiroshima: The many other things America hasn't apologized for," *Washington Post*, May 26, 2016.

Eric Draitser, "Obama in Hiroshima: A Case Study in Hypocrisy," *Stop Imperialism*, May 20, 2016.

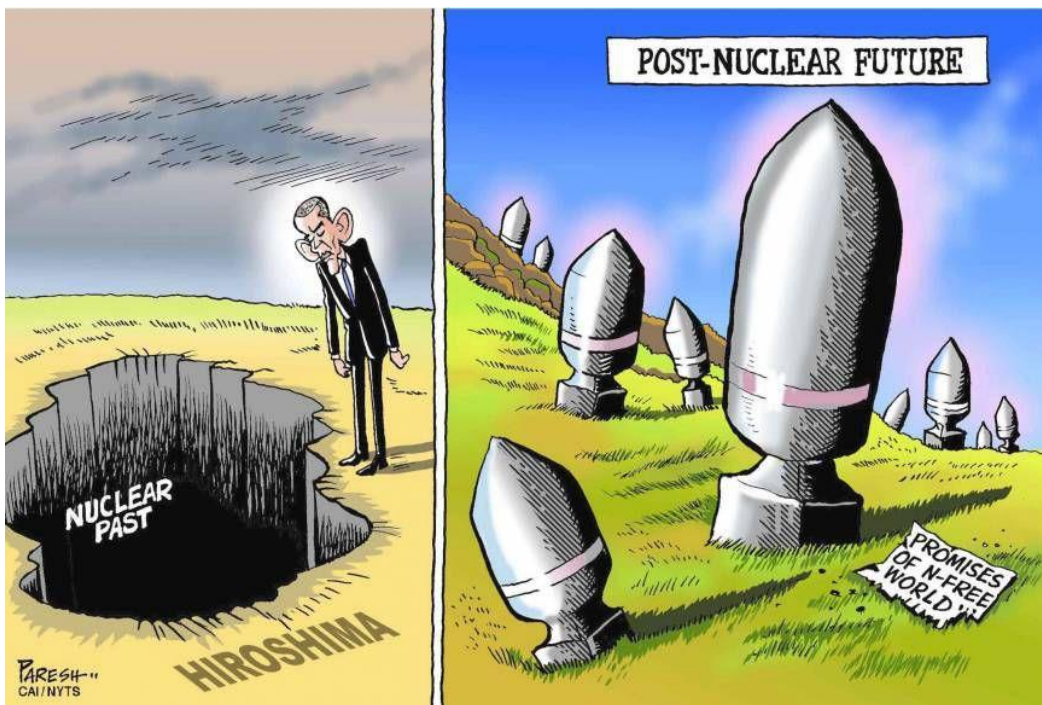
Gar Alperovitz, "We didn't need to drop the bomb — and even our WW II military icons knew it," *Salon*, May 12, 2016.

Jack Mirkinson, "America's enduring Hiroshima shame: Why Barack Obama should apologize for the atomic bomb — but won't," *Salon*, May 12, 2016.

Miki Toda and Mari Yamaguchi, "Japanese Don't Expect Apology from Obama During Visit to Hiroshima," *Global News*, May 11, 2016.

Simon Wood, "Obama Does Hiroshima," *Dianuke.org*, May 28, 2016.

But why Nagasaki?



Why was Nagasaki nuked?

by Brahma Chellaney

June 1, 2016

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2016/06/01/commentary/japan-commentary/why-was-nagasaki-nuked/#.V08De-Rdeot>

BERLIN – Just as Hiroshima has become the symbol of the horrors of nuclear war and the essentialness of peace, the visit of the first sitting U.S. president to that city was laden with symbolism, including about the ironies of human action. As Barack Obama put it, when the United States carried out history’s first nuclear attack by dropping a bomb, “a flash of light and a wall of fire destroyed a city and demonstrated that mankind possessed the means to destroy itself.”

Two questions, however, remain unanswered to this day: Why did the U.S. carry out the twin atomic attacks when Japan appeared to be on the verge of unconditionally surrendering? And why was the second bomb dropped just three days after the first, before Japan had time to fully grasp the strategic implications of the first nuclear attack?

Months before the nuclear bombings, the defeat of Japan was a foregone conclusion. Japan’s navy and air force had been destroyed and its economy devastated by a U.S. naval blockade and relentless American firebombing raids.

During his Hiroshima visit, Obama called for “a future in which Hiroshima and Nagasaki are known not as the dawn of atomic warfare but as the start of our own moral awakening.” But can there be a moral awakening when almost every nuclear power today is expanding or upgrading its arsenal, thus increasing the risk of nuclear use, either by accident or design?

Obama has himself highlighted the yawning gap between rhetoric and reality. In Hiroshima, reprising his famous words of 2009 in Prague, Obama said that “among those nations like my own that hold nuclear stockpiles, we must have the courage to escape the logic of fear and pursue a world without them.” But at home, he has quietly pursued an extensive expansion of the U.S. nuclear arsenal. Under him, the U.S. is spending about \$355 billion as part of a 10-year plan to upgrade its nuclear armory.

Almost 71 years after the nuclear incineration of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and more than a generation after the end of the Cold War, nuclear weapons still underpin the security policies of the world’s most powerful states. Indeed, the composition of the United Nations Security Council’s permanent membership suggests that international political power is coterminous with intercontinental-range nuclear-weapons power.

There can be no moral awakening without jettisoning the political-military thinking that sanctioned the nuclear attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, leaving as many as 220,000 people — mostly civilians — dead. As Hiroshima and Nagasaki lay in ruins, President Harry Truman sent a team of military engineers, fire experts and photographers to the scene to analyze the death and destruction wrought by the twin attacks. The team reported “an unprecedented casualty rate” in Hiroshima, with 30 percent of the population killed and another 30 percent seriously injured.

The nuclear attack on Nagasaki generated a higher blast yield but produced a smaller area of complete devastation and lower casualties because, unlike Hiroshima’s flat terrain and circular shape, Nagasaki is a city with large hills and twin valleys. The second attack killed about 74,000 people, about half as many as those who died in the Hiroshima bombing. A city’s terrain and layout, the U.S. team’s report stated, must be considered “in evaluating the effectiveness” of nuclear bombing.

Even if one accepts Truman’s claim that the Hiroshima bombing was necessary to force Japan’s surrender and end the war without a full-scale U.S. invasion, what was the rationale for his action in nuking Nagasaki just three days later on Aug. 9, before Japan had time to surrender?

As the U.S. team’s report stated, Nagasaki was totally unprepared for the nuclear bombing, although “vague references to the Hiroshima disaster had appeared in the newspaper of Aug. 8.”

Decades later, there is still no debate in the U.S. on the moral or military calculus for bombing Nagasaki. No plausible explanation has been proffered for the attack.

After Hiroshima was nuked on Aug. 6, Russia took advantage of the situation by attacking Japan on Aug. 8, although its official declaration of war came a day later. Hours after news of Russia’s invasion of Sakhalin Island reached Tokyo, the Supreme War Guidance Council met to discuss Japan’s unconditional surrender. The nuclear bomb on Nagasaki was dropped as Soviet forces were overwhelming Japanese positions in Manchuria and Japan appeared set to surrender to the Allied powers.

Indeed, according to the U.S. team’s report, the “decision to seek ways and means to terminate the war — influenced in part by knowledge of the low state of popular morale — had been taken in May 1945 by the Supreme War Guidance Council.” This would suggest that even the nuclear bombing of Hiroshima was needless.

In the days before the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings, the only question facing Japan was when to unconditionally surrender under the terms of the July 26 Potsdam Declaration. The signals the Japanese were sending that they were prepared to surrender were missed or ignored by the U.S. The surrender was eventually announced by Emperor Hirohito on Aug. 15 after U.S. assurances on the Emperor’s continued role — assurances that were not provided earlier, as American scholar Gar Alperovitz has pointed out — which possibly could have ended the war without the atomic bombs being used.

In truth, Nagasaki’s nuclear incineration had no military imperative. If there was any rationale, it was technical or strategic in nature — to demonstrate the power of the world’s first plutonium bomb. The

bomb that reduced Hiroshima to ashes was an untested uranium bomb, code-named “Little Boy,” with Truman applauding the bomb’s success as “the greatest achievement of organized science in history.” The bomb used in the Nagasaki attack was an implosion-type plutonium bomb. Code-named “Fat Man,” it had been secretly tested in the New Mexico desert on July 16, a development that paved the way for the Potsdam ultimatum to Japan.

Indeed, Truman intentionally delayed his Potsdam meeting with Soviet strongman Josef Stalin until after the testing of the new weapon. Truman wanted the power of the new weapon to end the war in the Pacific, rather than the Soviet Union invading Japan and inflicting a decisive blow to force its surrender. Anxious not to let the Soviet Union gain a major foothold in the Asia-Pacific region, he sought to persuade Stalin at Potsdam to delay the invasion.

Days later when Hiroshima was destroyed, Truman broke the news to his shipmates aboard the USS Augusta, saying, “The experiment has been an overwhelming success.” The Nagasaki bombing was his second nuclear “experiment.” The geopolitical logic of the nuclear bombings was to establish U.S. primacy in the postwar order.

American author Kurt Vonnegut, best known for his World War II satirical novel “Slaughterhouse-Five,” called the Nagasaki bombing the “most racist, nastiest act” of the U.S. after the enslavement of blacks. And the chief prosecutor at the Nuremberg trials, Telford Taylor, once described the Nagasaki bombing as a war crime, saying: “The rights and wrongs of Hiroshima are debatable, but I have never heard a plausible justification of Nagasaki.”

Actually, the U.S. plan was to drop the plutonium bomb on Kokura (present-day Kitakyushu). But Kokura was under a heavy cloud blanket on Aug. 9, so the B-29 bomber was diverted to a larger city, Nagasaki, Japan’s gateway to the world. Nagasaki, Japan’s oldest and densest stronghold of Roman Catholicism, was paradoxically destroyed by a predominantly Christian America.

Dropping the more powerful plutonium bomb on a large civilian population center appeared to matter more to those in charge of the “experiment” than which particular city they targeted. Indeed, brushing aside the suggestion of Army Chief of Staff Gen. George C. Marshall for non-urban target selection, the atomic “hit” list comprised important cities.

Japan became something of a guinea pig as the U.S. sought to demonstrate to the world, particularly to the Soviet Union, that it had awesome destructive power at its disposal. After Adolf Hitler, who symbolized the most potent military threat to the Allied powers, committed suicide in April 1945, just days after Truman took office, Japan became the test site for demonstration of America’s newborn nuclear might. The use of a technological discovery to incinerate Hiroshima and Nagasaki was made possible by a widely prevalent political-military culture at that time that regarded civilian massacres as a legitimate tool of warfare. All sides engaged in mass killings in World War II, in which nearly 60 million people died. Against this background, no warning was given to the residents of Hiroshima or Nagasaki before unleashing a nuclear holocaust. Nor did Truman give Japan a firm deadline to surrender before rushing into a second nuclear attack.

History is written by the victors, and the vanquishers are rarely burdened by the guilt of their actions. Still, Hiroshima and Nagasaki will remain a burden on American conscience — Hiroshima because it was the world’s first atomic bombing, setting a precedent, and Nagasaki because it was a blatantly wanton act. Obama’s visit to the Hiroshima memorial should be seen in this light. He made no apology, yet he stated expressively: “We come to ponder a terrible force.”

Nuclear arms remain the toxic fruit of a technology that destroyed Hiroshima and Nagasaki. World War II reached its savage end in Hiroshima and Nagasaki only to spawn the dawn of a dangerous nuclear age. And the last strike of the world war, Nagasaki, became the opening shot of a new Cold War.

Nuclear-deterrence strategies still rely on targeting civilian and industrial centers. In fact, a wary U.S., a rising China and a declining Russia are currently developing a new generation of smaller, more effective nukes that threaten to increase nuclear-use risks.

Ominously, the world today has a treaty (although not in force as yet) that bans all nuclear testing, but no treaty to outlaw the use of nuclear weapons. In other words, those that are party to the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty are prohibited from testing a nuclear weapon at home but remain legally unfettered to test the weapon by dropping it over some other state. The option of “doing a Hiroshima” on an adversary with an untested weapon must be foreclosed.

Brahma Chellaney, a geostrategist and author, is a long-standing contributor to The Japan Times.

The clock ticks down

June 16, 2016

Twenty years on, U.N. waits for working nuclear-test-ban treaty

VIENNA – The world was a more peaceful place when a newly sworn-in President Barack Obama pledged to “aggressively pursue” a global ban on nuclear arms tests. But as his term winds down, a working test-ban treaty remains a dream and some of the loudest voices out of Washington are hostile.

Seven years on, the Obama administration continues to publicly back ratifying the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). Secretary of State John Kerry vowed late last year to “re-energize” efforts for congressional approval — a move that the head of the U.N. organization created to enforce a ban says would lead at least some of the other holdouts to do the same.

“The U.S. needs to show leadership,” said Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) chief Lassina Zerbo ahead of the 20th anniversary of his organization. “We need to keep the momentum on what President Obama said in 2009.”

But with Obama’s days in office numbered, that appears to be a forlorn hope. His deputy national security adviser, Ben Rhodes, told the Arms Control Association last week that Republican control of the Senate had left the administration “with no viable path forward” for ratification.

Zerbo’s organization had hoped that Kerry would come to events marking Monday’s anniversary, prompting the foreign ministers of the four other permanent Security Council members plus Germany to follow. But Kerry decided to send his undersecretary for arms control, Rose Goettemoeller, and his five counterparts from the six powers that signed the nuclear deal with Iran also were no-shows.

State Department spokesman Mark Toner says ratification is “still a priority,” adding Kerry’s absence does not mean that Washington is “no longer interested in CTBT.” White House officials also say Obama still supports ratification and is providing substantial funds to the effort.

Republicans already rejected ratification 17 years ago under President Bill Clinton, with Senate approval falling far short of the required two-thirds majority. But there are also other hurdles.

While Hillary Clinton is more likely to endorse ratification than Donald Trump, tensions with Russia and China, Mideast turmoil, terrorist threats and yet unknown future crises are likely to come first for either of the two.

The CTBTO already polices the world for any sign of nuclear tests with a global network of monitoring stations that pick up seismic signals and gases released by such events. But it still cannot go on site to inspect for tests.

That can happen only if the treaty enters into force. And that will happen only if the holdouts among the 44 countries that are designated “nuclear capable” — the United States, China, Egypt, India, Iran, Israel, North Korea and Pakistan — ratify.

Treaty backers argue that the United States has nothing to lose by ratification because it hasn’t performed a nuclear explosive test since 1992 and computer modeling now appears to make such live tests unnecessary. At the same time, North Korea, the only nation known to be testing, would likely have done so even if the treaty were in force.

“There is no room for any further tests ... in this civilized world,” Zerbo said, as he urged the U.S. to show the way.

Proponents share that view. Harvard University nuclear policy analyst Matthew Bunn says that “if the United States ratified, it is very likely China would ratify. Then, he says, “the United States and China would ... be in a much better position to pressure India, Pakistan, Iran, Egypt, and Israel to ratify.”

Advocates also suggest the treaty should appeal to skeptics in U.S. Congress by locking in a technological advantage that puts the United States ahead of other countries following its lead.

Mark Fitzpatrick of the International Institute for Strategic Studies describes it as preserving “America’s competitive edge.” Bunn agrees, saying that others would find it “very difficult to bring on really new nuclear weapons with really new capabilities without testing them.”

Congressional opponents challenge such opinions.

The treaty “should remain dead,” senators Tom Cotton and James Lankford declared last month, arguing that it would allow U.S. rivals to cheat while diminishing America’s security in an increasingly hostile world.

“In the shadow of another North Korean nuclear test, illicit rocket launch, and the catastrophic Iran nuclear deal, the Obama administration advocating for a flawed international nuclear-weapons treaty is mind-boggling,” they wrote.

But others say that today’s uncertain times speak more than anything for ratification of perhaps the only arms treaty that most countries agree with. Zerbo calls it “the lowest hanging fruit that anybody serious about ... arms control can grab,” while Fitzpatrick says that “the treaty should be locked it in now before things get worse.”

Bunn sees other benefits. He says that ratification by nations with nuclear arms would be a welcome sign for other countries that the holdouts are “making progress toward their disarmament obligations.” And while North Korea will likely continue defiant at least until any regime change, Bunn says that ratification by all others would make it easier to build an international coalition to pressure Pyongyang.

As it waits, the CTBTO is making itself useful. It has been on the forefront of providing detailed information on the North Korean nuclear tests. Its radionuclide detectors also delivered benchmark data on the spread of radioactivity from the Fukushima No. 1 nuclear disaster. And its seismic sensor network has been crucial for tsunami warnings.

But as the clock ticks down, the organization could be running out of time.

Bunn says that some states may “decide it’s not worth it to have monitors in their country sending data to countries that haven’t bothered to ratify, and will drop out, or that countries will get sick of paying for the verification system for a treaty that never enters into force.”

That, he says, means that “the existing verification system could collapse — endangering not only test monitoring but the other benefits.”

Clandestine modernisation of US nuclear arsenal

June 19, 2016

Obama's nuclear deception

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2016/06/19/commentary/japan-commentary/obamas-nuclear-deception/#.V2agHaJdeov>

U.S. President Barack Obama deeply impressed the Japanese public with the speech he delivered in the world's first atom-bombed city of Hiroshima on May 27. But on his home turf, he is **clandestinely pushing a plan to modernize the U.S. nuclear arsenal.**

The plan, with its development cost estimated at \$1 trillion over the next 30 years, is aimed at downsizing missiles capable of carrying nuclear warheads and improving their mobility with new delivery systems and platforms.

When does Obama expect to achieve a world without nuclear weapons, which he called for again in Hiroshima?

In his speech, he said the world war "reached its brutal end in Hiroshima and Nagasaki," labeling it "the start of our moral awakening." He went on to say, "But among those nations like my own that hold nuclear stockpiles, we must have courage to escape the logic of fear and pursue a world without them."

His speech was well-balanced. He impressed the people of Japan to some extent while deftly avoiding using words like "remorse" or "apology." Behind a glamorous diplomatic show, however, a major revolution occurring only once in decades is taking place in the U.S. nuclear weapons scheme, without being noticed by most Americans, let alone Japanese.

Around May each year, the defense industry launches major campaigns to win new government contracts. The industry's attention is directed especially to projects of the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) as new development programs are launched for platforms and delivery means of nuclear weapons.

According to a Washington-based U.S. reporter covering defense-related matters, **the major concepts in modernization of nuclear weapons are downsizing and improved reliability.** The U.S. Defense Department argues that the smaller and more accurate nuclear arms are, the greater deterrent roles they play and is telling the president that those sophisticated weapons serve to bring about a world where there is little or no chance of nuclear arms being used, even though that would fall short of elimination of such weapons, according to the reporter. The president must have accepted the view, the reporter says.

Of the four categories of the development programs pursued by the Pentagon and the NNSA, the most controversial is modernization and downsizing of nuclear warheads, which constitutes the core of the whole scheme. In parallel with making warheads smaller, new models of platforms and nuclear weapons delivery systems will be introduced step by step in three fields: intercontinental ballistic missiles, submarine-launched ballistic missiles, and submarines and strategic bombers.

In a nuclear posture review announced in 2010, the Obama administration pledged that the U.S. will not develop new nuclear warheads. **To the Pentagon, the new development plan does not constitute developing "new nuclear warheads."**

Most of today's U.S. nuclear weapons were developed during the Cold War and they receive checks annually under the NNSA's program to extend their life span. But that is not enough to prevent the weapons from becoming obsolete.

This led the George W. Bush administration to push a new program to replace old nuclear warheads with reliable versions, which are “new” types of nuclear warheads beyond doubt. This program was ended after Obama pledged to work toward a world without nuclear weapons. But then the Pentagon redefined the life-span prolongation program, insisting that replacing old nuclear warheads with newer, reliable warheads is part of the plan and that the replacements should not be regarded as new weapons. Obama agreed with the Pentagon’s argument and **the development of new nuclear warheads survived under the vague term of “refurbishing.”**

According to the Arms Control Association (ACA), an American military think tank, the Pentagon and the NNSA are working on halving the types of U.S. nuclear warheads, which number 10 at present, and introducing the B61 Model 12 nuclear warhead as a replacement with the aim of sharply reducing the explosive force, the nuclear fallout and casualties. The New York Times has reported that the destructive force of the new model is a mere 2 percent of that of the bomb dropped on Hiroshima in 1945.

Smaller warheads require new means of delivery and platforms. Thus, the Pentagon is preparing new Minuteman III ICBMs costing an estimated \$62 billion, SSBN-X submarines to replace the Ohio-class submarines costing an estimated \$139 billion, and long-range “standoff” cruise missiles costing an estimated \$25 billion. The ACA estimates that the total cost of the new development programs will come to \$1 trillion.

There is no comprehensive name to cover all these development programs. Each is deliberated on separately by Congress and relevant government sections. Thus, **the shape of the U.S. nuclear forces is undergoing changes without any information given to the public.** That is the reason why the plan can be described as “clandestine.”

The most exhaustive comment on the issue came from Deputy Defense Secretary Robert Work when he testified before the House Armed Services Committee in June last year.

He estimates that the “modernization and maintenance” programs will cost \$1.8 billion annually from fiscal years 2021 to 2035. When expenses of the related facilities are added, the share of the nuclear weapons-related costs in the total defense budget is to rise from the present 3 percent to 7 percent. In other words, **the Obama administration plans to make U.S. military forces far more dependent on nuclear arms than they are today.**

Not only do these development programs run counter to Obama’s ideal of a world without nuclear weapons — downsizing the nuclear warheads will increase the chances of them being used, as stated on a PBS news program by James Cartwright, former vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Regardless of what Washington says to justify its nuclear modernization programs, Russia and China have objected to it, saying that it poses a major threat to them. Indeed, when a mock test flight of the Model 12 warhead was conducted, Russia condemned the U.S. for “preparing a new weapon.”

It is certain that if the U.S. continues to pursue the modernization of its nuclear arsenal, China and Russia will take countermeasures. **The possibility is rising day by day that these superpowers will confront each other with light and compact nuclear weapons in the not-so-distant future** — despite Obama’s speech in Hiroshima.

This is an abridged translation of an article from the June issue of Sentaku, a monthly magazine covering political, social and economic scenes.

Hair-trigger alert: An unacceptable risk

Top Scientists Call for Obama to Take Nuclear Missiles off Hair-Trigger Alert

<http://blog.ucsusa.org/lisbeth-gronlund/top-scientists-call-for-obama-to-take-nuclear-missiles-off-hair-trigger-alert>

Lisbeth Gronlund, physicist & co-director, Global Security | June 22, 2016, 3:35 pm EDT

More than 90 prominent US scientists, including 20 Nobel laureates and 90 National Academy of Sciences members, sent a letter to President Obama yesterday urging him to take US land-based nuclear missiles off hair-trigger alert and remove launch-on-warning options from US warplans.

As we've discussed previously on this blog and elsewhere, keeping these weapons on hair-trigger alert so they can be launched within minutes creates the risk of a mistaken launch in response to false warning of an incoming attack.

This practice dates to the Cold War, when US and Soviet military strategists feared a surprise first-strike nuclear attack that could destroy land-based missiles. By keeping missiles on hair-trigger alert, they could be launched before they could be destroyed on the ground. But as the letter notes, removing land-based missiles from hair-trigger alert "would still leave many hundreds of submarine-based warheads on alert—many more than necessary to maintain a reliable and credible deterrent."

"Land-based nuclear missiles on high alert present the greatest risk of mistaken launch," the letter states. "National leaders would have only a short amount of time—perhaps 10 minutes—to assess a warning and make a launch decision before these missiles could be destroyed by an incoming attack."

Past false alarms

Over the past few decades there have been numerous U.S. and Russian false alarms—due to technical failures, human errors and misinterpretations of data—that could have prompted a nuclear launch. The scientists' letter points out that today's heightened tension between the United States and Russia increases that risk.

The scientists' letter reminds President Obama that he called for taking nuclear-armed missiles off hair-trigger alert after being elected president. During his 2008 presidential campaign, he also noted, "[K]eeping nuclear weapons ready to launch on a moment's notice is a dangerous relic of the Cold War. Such policies increase the risk of catastrophic accidents or miscalculation."

Other senior political and military officials have also called for an end to hair-trigger alert.

The scientists' letter comes at an opportune time, since the White House is considering what steps the president could take in his remaining time in office to reduce the threat posed by nuclear weapons.

Japan nuclear weapons-ready

June 24, 2016

Japan could get nuclear weapons 'virtually overnight,' Biden tells Xi

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2016/06/24/national/politics-diplomacy/japan-get-nuclear-weapons-virtually-overnight-biden-tells-xi/#.V26iJKJdeot>

Kyodo

WASHINGTON – U.S. Vice President Joe Biden has told Chinese President Xi Jinping that Japan has the capacity to acquire nuclear weapons “virtually overnight.”

Speaking at a Public Broadcasting Service program aired Monday, Biden said he had urged Xi to exert influence on North Korea so it will abandon its missile and nuclear weapons developments.

Referring to Pyongyang’s recent nuclear test and missile launches in violation of U.N. Security Council resolutions, Biden said that if China and the United States fail to take effective action against North Korea, “What happens if Japan, who could go nuclear tomorrow? They have the capacity to do it virtually overnight.”

Biden did not say when his conversation with Xi took place.

The vice president said China “has the single greatest ability to influence North Korea by cutting off A, B, C, D, a whole range of things, but it also could cause the implosion of North Korea.”

Biden said North Korea is building nuclear weapons that can strike as far as away the U.S. mainland. “And I say, so we’re going to move up our defense system,” he said, suggesting Washington intends to deploy an advanced U.S. missile interception system called Terminal High Altitude Area Defense, or THAAD, in South Korea.

The vice president quoted Xi as saying, “Wait a minute, my military thinks you’re going to try to circle us,” underscoring China’s opposition to the deployment of THAAD in South Korea.

Biden dismissed Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump’s view that he is open to the idea of both Japan and South Korea developing their own nuclear weapons and would be willing to withdraw U.S. troops from their soil.

“It’s okay with Donald Trump. But it’s not okay for us to continue to see the proliferation of nuclear weapons around the world,” he said.

Asked about Biden’s remarks, Japanese Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Hiroshige Seko said at a news conference Friday in Tokyo that Japan “can never possess nuclear weapons.”

Seko said the three non-nuclear principles of not producing, possessing or allowing nuclear weapons on Japanese territory are an important basic policy of the Japanese government.

There can be no response to nuclear weapons

February 24, 2016

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fUUSipVIUus&feature=youtu.be>

Why an Emergency Response to a Nuclear Attack is Impossible

4 minutes presentation by IPPNW (International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War) explaining why there can be no response to the use of nuclear weapons

From Cold War I to Cold War II

2016/07/10

See also <http://www.fukushima-is-still-news.com/2016/06/ clandestine-modernisation-of-us-nuclear-arsenal.html>

An Overview of the Nuclear Age: From Cold War I to Cold War II

[http://nf2045.blogspot.fr/2016/07/an-overview-of-nuclear-age-from-cold.html?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Feed:+NuclearFreeBy2045+\(Nuclear+Free+by+2045?\)](http://nf2045.blogspot.fr/2016/07/an-overview-of-nuclear-age-from-cold.html?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Feed:+NuclearFreeBy2045+(Nuclear+Free+by+2045?))

I was recently asked by a weekly news program to submit some notes and ideas for a thirty-minute program on the history of America's nuclear weapons program, from 1945-2016. I got a bit carried away and ended up writing the text that follows. This text doesn't appear in the program that was produced, but I was told that it helped shape, to some unknowable degree, the topics covered in the interview with historian Peter Kuznick. With or without my influence, the interview provided an excellent introduction to the special relationship between Japan and America. A second installment is forthcoming.

<https://youtu.be/VZd7Hr3MBmg>

Imperial Japan, the Bomb & the Pacific Powder Keg

On May 27th, 2016, Barack Obama visited Hiroshima, the first time an American president had ever visited the city while still in office. His speech there was a sermon that de-personified the attacks and exculpated the president who authorized them. He spoke only abstractly about how “death fell from the sky” seventy-one years ago. With his mind on domestic pressure not to say anything that resembled an apology, President Obama strenuously avoided mentioning the nation and the individuals who were responsible for the decision to drop atomic weapons on civilian populations. Additionally, he made no specific proposals about moving forward in nuclear disarmament.

In American public perceptions, there is still the common belief that the bombs “ended the war” and saved a greater number of both Japanese and American lives. A new National Parks museum called The Manhattan Project National Historical Park, with three venues at Hanford, Los Alamos and Oak Ridge, is hoping to tone down the triumphal, one-sided aspect of previous texts and exhibits (like the Smithsonian exhibit in 1995). They are now considering incorporating the views of Japanese victims and American victims whose health was damaged by the production and testing of nuclear bombs. [1]

Nonetheless, the triumphalist perspective persists as a stubborn meme in American culture, even though the debate among historians is essentially over. Historians such as Tsuyoshi Hasegawa, with his book *Racing Against the Enemy*, [2] have shown that it was the Soviet entry into the war that provoked the Japanese to surrender on August 15, 1945, one week after Stalin declared war on Japan. If the surrender hadn't come then, Japan's circumstances were so dire that it would have come soon without the need of an American invasion. This argument was made by several high military officials in the weeks before the bombs were used, but by this time a billion 1945 dollars had been spent on the Manhattan Project, and everyone involved in making the bombs feared the political fallout of *not* using them. Then there was the motive to demonstrate to the Soviet Union that America possessed this new weapon and was willing to use it.

Seventy-one years later, there are now nine countries that possess nuclear weapons: USA, Russia, China, France, UK, Pakistan, India, North Korea and Israel, the only one of the nine that maintains a stance of ambiguity—refusing to declare whether it has nuclear weapons, even though it is known beyond doubt that they do. In total the nine countries have about 15,000 weapons, with 93% of them held by the US and Russia, with about 7,000 each. Each side has over one thousand on “hair-trigger alert” status in which they

are vulnerable to accidental launch or an overly hasty decision to launch with incomplete or inaccurate information held by those who would have to make the fatal decision.

In 1946, America took control of many of the Pacific islands it had occupied during the war. Nuclear weapon tests began in July with the tests in the Marshall Islands on the Bikini Atoll, which prompted a French fashion designer to launch a swimsuit design we all know today. It was described that summer as a “weapon of mass seduction” and “*une bombe anatomique*,” but for Marshall Islanders there were no jokes to be made. They were relocated within the island chain to small atolls that were already occupied and crowded. In spite of the relocations, many of the still-inhabited islands were showered with fallout. US military personnel were also exposed, and some of the irradiated ships were hauled back to Guam and the US mainland for scuttling or dismantling. Treasure Island in San Francisco Bay is one of the places where this contamination remains a problem to this day. [3]

In 1949, the Soviets tested their first nuclear device in Kazakhstan, and after that the arms race and the global paranoia of mutually assured destruction accelerated into high gear. By the mid-fifties, both nations were testing hydrogen weapons which were thousands of times more powerful than the bombs used in 1945. The public knew little about what was going on, but the Castle Bravo 15-megaton H-bomb test in the Bikini Atoll, on March 1, 1954, went horribly wrong for military planners. The yield was larger than predicted, and fallout landed on several Japanese fishing boats that were outside the zone of exclusion. The ship called Lucky Dragon No. 5 arrived back in Japan with the crew suffering from radiation sickness. The captain died shortly after his return. The lid of secrecy surrounding nuclear testing was blown off because Japanese media covered the story intensely, and from there the story went global. Throughout the season tuna caught in the Pacific continued to test positive for radiation. This incident triggered the anti-nuclear movement throughout the world, leading eventually to a ban on atmospheric testing in 1963 signed by the US, UK and USSR.

Britain and France had their own arsenals, with their own testing programs in Australia, Christmas (Kirimati) Island, French Polynesia and Algeria. China and France did not sign the Limited Test Ban Treaty and tested in the atmosphere until 1974 and 1980 respectively. India and Pakistan conducted all their tests underground. In this century, only North Korea still conducts tests, while the others make do with sub-critical tests and computer simulations.

In 1950, the US had about 1,000 nuclear weapons. By 1962, at the time of the Cuban Missile Crisis, the USSR and the US each had thirty thousand. Fearing many of their weapons would be hit in pre-emptive strikes, or that they would miss their targets, they planned for massive redundancy and overkill with bombs that had yields big enough to render life impossible in areas the size of the Boston to Washington corridor. One positive result of the Cuban Missile Crisis was that it moved both sides to sober up. They installed a “hotline” so that leaders could communicate directly during a crisis. The process of détente, a general term for the relaxing of tensions between the two powers, lasted from the late 1960s to the 1980s, and it helped somewhat to inhibit enthusiasm on both sides for involvement in conflicts in the developing world.

Newcomers to disarmament studies are confronted with a bewildering list of acronyms for all the bilateral and international treaties related to nuclear weapons. Since the early 1960s there has been the Limited Test Ban Treaty, the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, the Outer Space Treaty, the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, and all the US-Soviet/Russia agreements: SALT I, SALT II, START I, START II, START III Framework, SORT, New START, the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, and others. [4]

The most significant may be the 1968 United Nations Non-Proliferation Treaty, which most of, but not all of, the world’s nations have signed. [5] The key stipulation of the treaty is that because non-nuclear states have agreed not to pursue the possession of nuclear weapons, the states that do possess them are

obligated to work in good faith and a timely manner to eliminate their own arsenals. The Marshall Islands (now an independent country), with the support of other Pacific island nations affected by nuclear tests, brought a case to the International Court of Justice in 2014, charging all nine nuclear armed countries with failing to act on their obligations to disarm. Even the non-signatories (India, Pakistan, North Korea and Israel) were targeted because the Marshall Islands case argues that they are still obliged to act under customary international law.

Presently, only Britain, India and Pakistan have addressed the charges. The other nuclear powers chose to not respond to the suit at all. [6] Herein lies a fundamental contradiction of possessing nuclear weapons.

Nuclear armed nations participate in drafting international treaties on nuclear proliferation and sign them, but possessing nuclear weapons means they can choose when they do not wish to obey international law. There is no enforcement authority that can make a nuclear-armed state do what it does not want to do, and this of course is the reason the weapons are coveted. No one has used a nuclear bomb in warfare since 1945, but the possessors know that the value of nuclear weapons is in what is called their “non-explosive uses”—their ability to deter, intimidate, and hold leverage over others.

Another clause in the Non-Proliferation Treaty guarantees signatories the right to use nuclear energy if they agree to not pursue the development of nuclear weapons. A large segment of the global civilian population finds this unacceptable, believing that because every nuclear energy program produces fissile material, nuclear energy can never be de-linked from proliferation. Nuclear energy also produces nuclear accidents and nuclear waste, so they involve the some of the same unacceptable hazards as weapons.

However, the UN agency that is tasked with guarding against nuclear weapons proliferation, **the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is also the global watchdog and promoter of nuclear energy. It even has veto power over the research agenda and conclusions of the World Health Organization on matters related to the health effects of radiation.**

In the early 1980s, popular anti-nuclear movements reached critical mass. In a very different sort of “Manhattan Project,” 1,000,000 anti-nuclear protesters gathered in Central Park, New York in June 1982 to demand a world free of nuclear weapons. Christian evangelical groups were a reliable source of support for Republicans, but their support of the anti-nuclear cause worried Ronald Reagan. In his 1983 “evil empire” speech to evangelicals, he warned them about going soft on their godless adversary. He had put the world on notice during his first administration that he would take a hard line against the atheistic empire that he claimed was bent on global domination. He broke off détente, calling it a “a one-way street that the Soviet Union has used to pursue its own aims,” [7] and he announced the space-based anti-ballistic missile initiative that would become known as “Star Wars,” decisions which critics said went against the provisions of the Outer Space Treaty and the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty. Star Wars was never completed, but it served the purpose of striking fear into the leadership of the Soviet Union that strategic parity would be eliminated by an American advantage in space-based weapons.

While he came in like a hawk, Ronald Reagan proved himself to be a leader of puzzling contradictions. He turned out to be a different kind of cold warrior than many conservatives expected, especially as his re-election campaign approached. He remained hawkish on all other issues, and despised for them by his opponents, but nuclear disarmament was one issue where he charted a unique course. He rejected traditional hardliners who planned for a winnable nuclear war and declared himself to be dead serious about the elimination of nuclear weapons. He claimed to have been deeply affected by the 1951 movie *The Day the Earth Stood Still*, and was known to exasperate his staff by commenting repeatedly that peace would be achieved if the human race faced an alien threat. Other strong fictional influences were the 1983 films *War Games* and *The Day After*, a television movie which graphically depicted nuclear holocaust in the American heartland to an enormous prime-time audience of 100 million. [8] These were instances in

which Reagan's confusion of Hollywood and reality may have led to something good. By the mid-80s he became worried that his hawkish policy had spooked the Soviet leadership and alienated the American public which now wanted a return to détente and a reduction in the number of warheads. In November 1983 (the same month when *The Day After* was broadcast), the Soviets mistook the Able Archer NATO exercise for the real thing and readied their forces for a nuclear attack. [9] As Reagan faced re-election, he realized it was time to adopt a softer stance. A few weeks earlier, Stanislav Petrov, an officer at a Soviet early warning station was informed by a new computer system that five American missiles were incoming. Under protocol, he was supposed to inform the higher command, but he decided, correctly, that it was a false alarm. [10] It is a matter of speculation as to whether the Soviets would have launched on warning instead of waiting to confirm nuclear attacks. Some nuclear strategists, such as Robert McNamara believed it was tacit policy on both sides that no one would be insane enough to launch on warning. [11] **These two near misses weren't revealed until years later**, so American audiences watching *The Day After* were unaware of the ironic relationship between fact and fiction in November 1983.
<https://youtu.be/UzXcQ2Lr-40>

In the ABC News discussion panel that followed the broadcast of *The Day After*, (November 20, 1983), Robert McNamara states at the 47:40 mark of the video that both sides clearly understood the madness of launch on warning, but they maintained a position of ambiguity on their policy. He believed they wouldn't launch on warning.

Reagan was able to resist hardliner opinion because, unlike a Democrat president, there was no opposition to his right when he decided to engage with Soviet leaders in arms reduction negotiations. Yet in spite of his intentions, and the credit for ending the Cold War that Americans would give him, nothing would have changed if his Soviet counterpart had been anyone other than Mikhail Gorbachev.

In 1987, Reagan challenged Gorbachev in Berlin to "tear down this wall," and David Bowie's concert at the wall the same year did essentially the same thing. However, in spite of such Western political and cultural pressures (and self-congratulation for the achievement), the momentum for reform came from within the Soviet Union. Gorbachev was a sincere reformer and humanitarian, brutally honest about the failings of the Soviet system and the need for "new thinking" inside the USSR and in international relations. The Berlin Wall came down and the Warsaw Bloc collapsed for complex reasons, but mostly because Gorbachev made it clear he wouldn't send in the tanks to prop up the old system. Once it was clear that the East European regimes were on their own, events followed their natural course. Gorbachev was preoccupied with internal problems, more focused on economic and political reforms that would turn the USSR into a multi-party, democratic socialist market system similar to Western European countries. [12] By the end of the decade, Reagan was saying that his "evil empire" comment of just a few years earlier was now irrelevant, as it applied to a bygone era. In 1987, the two superpowers signed the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty, the Cold War's most significant arms-reduction agreement. By the mid-90s, both nations managed to reduce their arsenals to about 7,000 weapons each, the level at which they still remain.

Many anti-nuclear activists decry the fact that arms reduction halted at this still-unacceptable level. Seldom discussed is the questionable theory that the US and Russia both halted progress at this level because they agreed that their massive arsenals would deter other nations from ever trying to gain equality and thus nuclear proliferation is actually discouraged by the existence of this absurdly large number of nuclear warheads (see the comments by General Brent Scowcroft in the video above, 39:00~). [13]

In the 1990s, as the secrecy of the Cold War era faded, the full impact of the nuclear project started to become apparent. Uranium miners, military veterans, nuclear workers, downwinders and aboriginal and minority groups near test sites—in all nations that built weapons—started to be more aware of the health impacts. Most ominously, it became clear that genetic damage had been passed onto the children and grandchildren of nuclear test veterans. [14]

Official recognition and compensation came to some groups during the Clinton administration when Hazel O'Leary, an outsider to the organization, took charge of reforming the Department of Energy. Americans might have been more aware of Clinton's apology to victims unknowingly submitted to radiation experiments, but the news was pushed to the back pages on October 4th, 1995 by the announcement of the OJ Simpson verdict. [15]

In recent years, Gorbachev has spoken often about the West's broken promises to not expand NATO eastward, as well as other disastrous reversals of the trust that was built long ago. This month, 30 years after the historic 1986 Reykjavik summit with Reagan, Gorbachev noted the betrayal and disappointment that came after that hopeful time. [16] He said all attempts to resolve the numerous conflicts of the previous two decades militarily (Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, and Syria) through a "cult of force" have solved no real problems, and only led to the erosion of international law and the glorification of force. He added, "There has been a collapse of trust in relations between the world's leading powers that, according to the UN Charter, bear primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security." He stated that the international community cannot make progress toward the goal of a nuclear weapons-free world until the world gets back to normal politics and international relations are demilitarized.

In contrast to the days when the West found Gorbachev to be an international figure of great stature, his recent comments were reported only in a medium that the Obama administration considers to be a "Russian propaganda tool." As a response, Obama counters with \$100 million spent on nurturing Russian dissidents who are, supposedly, going to encourage a non-existent pro-American constituency within Russia to bring the country into line. [17] They fail to take note that the only significant opposition to Putin is in the nationalistic and belligerent parties that think he is too soft on America.

Amid this stalled progress caused by the deliberate antagonizing of Russia, President Obama's pledge to work toward a world free of nuclear weapons (for which he won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2009) is a dead letter. With so many congressional districts addicted to defense spending, Obama had to exchange the elimination of some aging weapons for the nuclear weapons modernization plan that will cost \$1 trillion over thirty years.

Meanwhile the world sits on a toxic legacy of nuclear waste that will plague the planet long into the "deep future." **Seventy-four years after the Manhattan Project began, there are still no proven successful nuclear waste repositories, and that goes for both military and civilian waste.** After all, how could anyone guarantee perfect containment for 100,000 years, with no fires, explosions, leaks or intrusions down in the hole?

In addition, sites throughout the country, like West Lake near St. Louis, and Niagara Falls, New York, are contaminated with wastes from weapons production. The large former weapons factories in places like Hanford, Washington, Rocky Flats, Colorado and Paducah, Kentucky (a partial list) present challenges that will stretch so far into the future that they might as well be called eternal. The promised cleanups that began decades ago are not going well. And the same goes for all nuclearized states.

Staff in America's weapons labs were actually assigned science fiction creative writing tasks to get them to consider all that could go wrong with the WIPP nuclear waste storage site in Southeast New Mexico. Their writing of a scenario known as *Free State of Chihuahua* amounted to federal employees envisioning a

future when the federal government no longer exists, a scenario in which New Mexico has reverted to its previous Mexican and Native American cultures, and impoverished inhabitants find the WIPP site and start salvaging the “valuable” scraps within. [18]

This example shows the extent to which the defense industry is the nation’s make-work program, engaged in elaborate plans to deal with a waste legacy of monstrous proportions while at the same time adding to it. The industry may not hire many science fiction writers, but it is often touted as the last sector of the American economy that manufactures *something*, that provides high-paying jobs to engineers and keeps the economy of states like New Mexico viable.

So is it the demand for jobs and economic spin-offs that leave our world bristling with thousands of nuclear missiles? Is it corporate lobbying and greed and the need to expand weapons markets that has led to Cold War II with the extension of NATO to Russia’s border? Can a popular “don’t bank on the bomb” campaign succeed? Would a boycott of weapons financiers work, or does the deadlock need to be broken by political leadership that has higher aspirations than jobs and profits? Are there any political leaders on the horizon who can repair the broken trust and militarized politics that Gorbachev speaks of? President Obama finished his speech in Hiroshima by saying “we can choose a future in which Hiroshima and Nagasaki are known not as the dawn of atomic warfare but as the start of our own moral awakening.” Yes we can, or how about yes *he* can, for only he has the power to awaken morally to the implications of his administration’s reckless attempt to provoke and destabilize Russia, the indispensable nation in his stated ambition to lead the world toward the elimination of nuclear weapons.

Notes

[1] Joe Copeland, “At Hanford, a chance for a fuller telling of atomic history,” *Crosscut*, June 9, 2016.

[2] Tsuyoshi Hasegawa, *Racing the Enemy: Stalin, Truman, and the Surrender of Japan* (Harvard University Press, 2006).

[3] Marisa Lagos, “Radiation levels at Treasure Island sites called no health threat,” *SF Gate*, August 28, 2014,

[4] U.S.-Russian Nuclear Arms Control Agreements at a Glance, Armscontrol.org.

[5] The Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) at a Glance, Armscontrol.org.

[6] Merritt Kennedy, “Tiny Marshall Islands Taking On 3 World Nuclear Powers In Court,” *National Public Radio*, March 3, 2016,

[7] “Ronald Reagan’s News Conference—January 29, 1981,” *The American Presidency Project*.

[8] Matthew Gault, “This TV Movie About Nuclear War Depressed Ronald Reagan: ‘The Day After’ made the president rethink nuclear proliferation,” *War is Boring*, February 19, 2015.

[9] Peter Beinart, “Think Again: Ronald Reagan,” *Foreign Policy*, June 2010.

[10] Colin Freeman, “How did one grumpy Russian halt Armageddon?” *The Telegraph*, May 11, 2015.

[11] ABC News Viewpoint: Discussion panel held immediately after the broadcast of *The Day After*, November 20, 1983. Robert McNamara states this point from the 47:40 mark of the video.

[12] Mikhail Gorbachev, *Gorbachev: On My Country and the World* (Columbia University Press, 1999) p. 34.

[13] ABC News Viewpoint: Discussion panel held immediately after the broadcast of *The Day After*, November 20, 1983. General Brent Scowcroft states this point from the 39:00 mark of the video.

[14] Chris Busby, “Chernobyl, genetic damage, and the UK nuclear bomb tests - justice at last?” *The Ecologist*, May 6, 2016,

[15] Marlene Cimon, “Clinton Apologizes for Radiation Tests,” *Los Angeles Times*, October 4, 1995.

[16] "Gorbachev warns world of 'cult of force,' says all recent conflicts could have had peaceful solution," *Russia Today*, June 3, 2016.

[17] Ricky Twisdale, "Nuland to Congress: We Spend \$100 Mil a Year Trying to Destabilize Russia," *Russia Insider*, June 9, 2016.

[18] Joseph Masco, *The Nuclear Borderlands: The Manhattan Project in Post-Cold War New Mexico*, Princeton University Press, 2006, p. 197-202. Masco describes the original research document containing the Free State of Chihuahua scenario: 10,000 Years of Solitude? published by Los Alamos National Laboratories. The title chosen by the government scientists is an interesting tip of the hat toward the Latino heritage of New Mexico and to the magic realism of both novelist Gabriel Garcia Marquez (author of *One Hundred Years of Solitude*) and the American nuclear weapons project.

Other links:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Strategic_Arms_Limitation_Talks

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Treaty_on_the_Non-Proliferation_of_Nuclear_Weapons

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Strategic_Arms_Limitation_Talks

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Treaty_on_the_Non-Proliferation_of_Nuclear_Weapons

<https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/nptfact>

<https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/USRussiaNuclearAgreementsMarch2010>

Death didn't fall from the sky: " They created it".

August 2, 2016

Hibakusha: A-bomb sufferers' group official regrets praising Obama speech

<http://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20160802/p2a/00m/0na/018000c>

Terumi Tanaka (Mainichi)

The secretary-general of the Japan Confederation of A- and H-Bomb Sufferers Organizations, who praised the speech given by United States President Barack Obama during his visit to Hiroshima, says he regretted doing so after learning the content of the speech in more detail.

- **【Related】 Hibakusha Series**

Terumi Tanaka, 84, was in attendance on May 27 this year when Obama was making what was the first visit of a sitting U.S. president to Hiroshima. Together with two other members of the confederation, he attended the ceremony at Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park where Obama spoke.

There was an interpreter for Obama's speech, but the speech was not handed out on paper. Tanaka was nervous as he listened, and without time to discuss the speech with the two other members, he was asked at a post-ceremony press conference for his opinion of Obama's speech. Sentences from the latter part of the speech, such as his reference to a future in which "Hiroshima and Nagasaki are known ... as the start of our own moral awakening," had stuck with him, and he praised the sentence as "excellent words." He noted, however, that he was "disappointed" that Obama had said, "We may not realize this goal (of a world without nuclear weapons) in my lifetime."

The next morning, with two newspapers in hand while on board a bullet train for home, Tanaka opened a page containing the Japanese translation of the speech. It began, "Seventy-one years ago, on a bright cloudless morning, death fell from the sky and the world was changed." Tanaka was stunned.

"Death did not 'fall from the sky.' This is making the death abstract. This is absolutely unacceptable,"

Tanaka thought. While on board the train he opened his laptop and began to write his "Essay of Regret." As he typed, erased and retyped, he says, "I began to get angry and stopped midway."

"They 'created' the death. As a sign of apology, I want them to eliminate nuclear weapons," he says.

Within the Essay of Regret, Tanaka blamed himself. At the press conference, he had, without thinking back well on the speech's contents, praised the speech's proactive tone. While he also expressed his dissatisfaction with its lack of any concrete description of the path forward to ending nuclear weapons, he still regrets what he said and feels he must take strong responsibility for his words then.

Tanaka was 13 years old when the Nagasaki atomic bomb hit. He was at his home some 3.2 kilometers from the hypocenter. A glass door dislodged by the blast and other debris fell on him, but he was miraculously unhurt. When he returned to the blasted area three days later to check on his relatives, he found charred corpses strewn around the area.

"There was (the corpse of) somebody with maggots growing," he recalls. The bomb stole the lives of five of his relatives, including an aunt.

This year marks the 60th anniversary of the founding of the Japan Confederation of A- and H-Bomb Sufferers Organizations. At a June 16 general meeting in Tokyo this year of the confederation, it adopted a resolution criticizing Obama's speech for "not mentioning at all his responsibility as president (in connection to the dropping of the atomic bomb)."

Tanaka says, "It does not mean that we just want him to say 'I apologize.' We want him to stand at the forefront of the movement to eliminate nuclear weapons from the world."

He adds, "Seventy-one years ago, death did not 'fall from the sky' like some natural phenomenon. They 'created' it when they dropped the atomic bomb. They created a hell that mustn't exist in our world." (By Sachi Fukushima, City News Department, Tokyo Head Office)

NATO & nuclear weapons

July 21, 2016

NATO: Increasing the role of nuclear weapons

<http://www.icanw.org/campaign-news/nato-increasing-the-role-of-nuclear-weapons/>

The **International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN)** is a global campaign coalition working to mobilize people in all countries to inspire, persuade and pressure their governments to initiate negotiations for a treaty banning nuclear weapons.

By Susi Snyder, PAX

The Heads of State and Government that participated in the NATO summit in Warsaw Poland on 8-9 July 2016 issued a series of documents and statements, including a Summit Communiqué and the Warsaw Declaration on Transatlantic Security. Whereas the majority of countries worldwide are ready to end the danger posed by nuclear weapons and to start negotiations for a treaty banning nuclear weapons, both

NATO documents reaffirmed the NATO commitment to nuclear weapons, and the Communiqué included a return to cold war style language on nuclear sharing.

Setting a bad example: NATO weakens commitment to nuclear disarmament

The summit documents weaken previously agreed language on seeking a world without nuclear weapons by tacking on additional conditions. Instead of simply saying that NATO is seeking to create the conditions for a world without nuclear weapons, now NATO is seeking to create the conditions “in full accordance with the NPT, including Article VI, in a step-by-step and verifiable way that promotes international stability, and is based on the principle of undiminished security for all.” Not only that, but instead of creating conditions for further reductions, now the alliance only remains “committed *to contribute to* creating the conditions for further reductions in the future on the basis of reciprocity” (emphasis added).

NATO member states needs to address the inherent proliferation push that results from their own refusal to end their reliance on nuclear weapons. With three nuclear armed member states, five states hosting US nuclear weapons, at least 15 states actively involved in NATO exercises practicing nuclear attacks, and a consensus document reemphasising the intention to keep the ability to threaten others with nuclear weapons as long as nuclear weapons exist – NATO continues to set a bad example.

Tightening the nuclear noose on the host states

The last several summits, since about 2010, had effectively removed language that explicitly linked the concept of ‘burden sharing’ with nuclear weapons, and had no direct reference to the forward deployed US nuclear weapons in Belgium, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Turkey. This document however adds new language and says:

NATO’s nuclear deterrence posture also relies, in part, on United States’ nuclear weapons forward-deployed in Europe and on capabilities and infrastructure provided by Allies concerned. These Allies will ensure that all components of NATO’s nuclear deterrent remain safe, secure, and effective. That requires sustained leadership focus and institutional excellence for the nuclear deterrence mission and planning guidance aligned with 21st century requirements.

This puts pressure on NATO members not only to make sure that they’re meeting the agreed target of spending 2% of GDP on defence, but also to make sure that they remain actively ready to participate in decisions to use nuclear weapons. By agreeing to this language, NATO heads of state and government have acknowledged that they are not acting in good faith towards a nuclear weapons free world, but instead will invest significantly in this weapon of mass destruction. It also means that despite efforts by several host countries, there is less scope for an alliance wide decision to remove the US nuclear weapons from Europe. This is not surprising though, the removal of forward deployed nuclear weapons has happened in the past, with host countries asking forgiveness for changing the posture, instead of permission to do so beforehand. The fact that this escalatory language was agreed at the highest level by NATO members shows that there is significantly less interest in taking any disarmament or non-proliferation responsibility at this time, reaffirmed by the Communiqué itself which says “We regret that the conditions for achieving disarmament are not favourable today”.

Leaving it up to Russia to make the next nuclear move

Through the repeated emphasis throughout the documents on reciprocity, NATO almost looks as if it is handing over decision making power over its nuclear weapons future to the Russian Federation, instead of leading the way towards de-escalation. For an alliance responsible for 60% of global defense spending, this relinquishing of control is plain peculiar. The document suggests that any future reductions are dependant on reciprocal action by the Russian Federation. Even the issue of transparency, a priority issue

for a number of host countries (particularly the Netherlands & Germany,) is now contingent on reciprocal action by the Russian Federation.

And then there's Turkey

The recent coup attempt in Turkey brings additional, and clearly unanticipated, concerns to the continued nuclear sharing practices in the alliance. Turkey has a slightly different situation than the other host countries. Turkey hosts the most American bombs (about 50) of the approximately 180 in Europe, but Turkish planes are not currently certified to drop the bombs in the same way the others are. Instead, use of nuclear weapons from Incirlik (the Turkish base where they are stored) would be done by US pilots. Currently, US (and German) pilots are stationed there, as Incirlik is used to fly (non nuclear) bombing missions over Syria. The chances that the nuclear weapons on the base could be stolen or used is slim, but it is not zero.

Opportunities for disarmament in times of tensions: the humanitarian initiative

In the last three years, nearly all NATO members (the exception being France) have participated in at least one of the conferences on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons. These conferences have reaffirmed that nuclear weapons are unique, and that there is no way to adequately prepare for or mitigate the consequences of their use. While the majority of states have seen this as an impetus to stigmatize, prohibit and eliminate the weapons, the small group of NATO states have instead chosen to ramp up the rhetoric on nuclear weapons instead, saying:

If the fundamental security of any of its members were to be threatened however, NATO has the capabilities and resolve to impose costs on an adversary that would be unacceptable and far outweigh the benefits that an adversary could hope to achieve.

NATO continues to say that its deterrence is based on a mix of nuclear and conventional forces, but this language boldly returns to cold war style rhetoric, and increases the ongoing escalation that is leading to a new nuclear arms race.

While the majority of the world recognizes that nuclear weapons should never be used again, under any circumstances the minority – those within NATO and Russia- are increasing the possibility of use. It is important to remember that all significant nuclear weapons treaties that are currently in force were negotiated during the Cold War. The increased perception of threat inspired creative action by those not engaged in the conflict, resulting in multilateral agreements with positive global ramifications. Multilateral negotiations on nuclear weapons have not progressed during decades of reduced great power tension leaving one to wonder if the rising threats now are the incentive needed to galvanize the international community to finally negotiate the prohibition of nuclear weapons.

Without clear milestones, timelines, and consequences there is no incentive for progress on nuclear disarmament or penalty for failure to disarm. This shows how the step-by-step approach advocated by NATO members has effectively become a delaying tactic. A nuclear ban treaty would eliminate the distinction between recognised nuclear weapon states and nuclear armed states, and put the focus on the illegality of the weapons, regardless of who possesses them. This would facilitate the delegitimizing of the weapon, and provide the legal underpinning to complete all of the 'steps' necessary to achieve and maintain a nuclear weapons free world.

In the past we've seen that rising tensions can force countries to reconsider the role of nuclear weapons. Most of the major disarmament and nonproliferation treaties were negotiated in times of heightened tensions: The Partial Test Ban Treaty (1963), the NPT (1970), the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (1987) and bilateral treaties such as the SALT and first START agreement. It is in those moments that governments seem to most aware of the insane dangers posed by the continued possession and threat of use of nuclear weapons by some states. The idea of the NPT, the cornerstone of multilateral

nuclear weapons disarmament was introduced by Ireland, a small non-aligned country that changed the world for the better. NATO has never been a leader when it comes to international law or international humanitarian law, but it always manages to adapt to whatever the rest of the world decides. Although these nuclear weapons addicted NATO states are not likely to join negotiations on a new treaty in a positive and cooperative manner, as the global context is changed through new multilateral negotiations to comprehensively prohibit nuclear weapons, all NATO heads of state (and the democratic countries they represent) will take notice and find ways to embrace the change, as they always do.

Hiroshi Omae's solo exhibition

August 4, 2016

Painter seeks to convey hellish scenes of Hiroshima atomic bombing

<http://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20160804/p2a/00m/0na/015000>

"I had to find a way to paint the hellish scenes of that day..."

Hiroshi Omae's solo exhibition, "The Black World and the Eyes Shining White," opened at the Tokyo Metropolitan Theater in Toshima Ward. After witnessing the bombing of Hiroshima at the age of 8, the atomic bomb became the theme of the painter's early work. With a desire to once again express the horrors of nuclear weapons, he returned last year to painting scenes of Hiroshima.

On the day of the bombing, Omae was at his home only about two kilometers west of ground zero. Having seen the B-29 bomber fly overhead, he was hit by a flash and the bomb blast as he fled indoors.

Until his late 20s, the atomic bomb was the theme of his work. Omae then began to feel that "as a survivor, describing the events of that day became unpleasant." Plagued by unshakeable fatigue and other symptoms he attributed to radiation exposure, "I had a sinking feeling that death was not far away." Faced with this unpleasant reality, he changed the theme of his paintings.

At the age of 32, in an attempt to distract himself from his circumstances, Omae moved to France. While traveling back and forth between France and Japan, he began painting the tranquil countryside of the south of France. However, three years ago, after seeing works themed on the religious ideas of "hell" and "the end of days" at an art museum in Paris, the memories of that day in Hiroshima came flooding back.

"In a world where everything had been charred black, only the eyes of the survivors shone eerily white," he explained. "Even if I die, if I can leave evidence of that hell in my paintings, then I will have successfully conveyed the horror of the atomic bomb." From that day forward he began to develop the concept for his works.

The works that appear in the solo exhibition include scenes of groups of charred survivors, mothers carrying their children with desolate expressions, and other scenes burned into 79-year-old Omae's memory from that day for a total of 31 abstract pieces. The exhibition runs until Aug. 7 and is open from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Admission is free.

1945 Soviet footage on Hiroshima & Nagasaki released

August 5, 2016

Hiroshima, Nagasaki release Soviet footage of A-bomb damage

THE ASAHI SHIMBUN

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201608050061.html>

Rare footage documenting the devastation of Hiroshima and Nagasaki shot by former Soviet researchers only months after the U.S. atomic bombings in 1945 were released to media representatives on Aug. 4. Sergei Naryshkin, chairman of the Russian State Duma, presented the five-minute black-and-white footage on a DVD when he met with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in Tokyo in June. It is voiced over with Russian narration.

It is the first time for Hiroshima and Nagasaki--which mark the 71st anniversaries of the atomic bombing on Aug. 6 and 9, respectively--to acquire videos of the aftermaths taken by the former Soviet Union.

The Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum on Aug. 5 started showing the video in its feature exhibition gallery. The showing will run until Oct. 2.

The Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum is also considering showing the footage to the public, describing it as a "valuable documentation."

The video starts with footage of the U.S. Trinity nuclear test in July 1945, the first successful detonation of an atomic bomb, followed by documentation of the flattened cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Officials at the Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum believe that the Nagasaki portion was shot on Sept. 16, 1945. They said it represents the earliest known video of the destroyed city after the one taken by the U.S. military on Sept. 8 and 9.

The video shows extensive damage to industrial facilities in Nagasaki, such as the plant of Mitsubishi Steel Mfg. Co. and a torpedo factory. Soviet researchers inspecting the ruins of the city were also captured on film.

According to the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum, judging from the levels of deterioration of damaged buildings and bridges, the Hiroshima portion was taken between Sept. 17, 1945, when a deadly typhoon hit the city, and around November that year.

It includes panning shots over the bombed-out landscape of Hiroshima, taken from the upstairs of the Hiroshima Fukokukan building, about 300 meters from ground zero, as well as from Hiroshima Chokinshikyoku (Hiroshima branch of postal bank), about 1.6 kilometers away.

(This article was compiled from reports by Yosuke Takashima and Kentaro Yamano.)

Abe: Japan will never have nuclear weapons

August 7, 2016

Abe: Japan will never consider possessing nukes

http://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20160806_19/

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe says the country will never possess, or even consider possessing, nuclear weapons.

Abe spoke to reporters after a memorial ceremony for the atomic bombing of Hiroshima on Saturday.

He was asked about remarks by new Defense Minister Tomomi Inada that Japan should not consider the possession of nuclear arms at the moment.

Abe said that Inada's comment is consistent with the government's policy.

He said Japan, as the only country to have experienced atomic bombings, firmly upholds its 3 non-nuclear principles.

Abe said, "It is our responsibility to make continuous and determined efforts toward a world without nuclear weapons."

Abe was also asked about the possibility of the constitution being revised. He said the matter should be discussed in a quiet environment, referring to Diet panels reviewing the constitution. He said lawmakers, regardless of their party affiliation, should express their views in serious discussions, leading to a national debate

Appeal to "collective wisdom"

August 9, 2016

Nagasaki mayor urges world to use collective wisdom to abolish nuclear weapons

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2016/08/09/national/nagasaki-mayor-urges-world-use-collective-wisdom-abolish-nuclear-weapons/#.V6l2NaJdeos>

Kyodo

NAGASAKI – Nagasaki Mayor Tomihisa Taue on Tuesday urged the international community to draw upon its "collective wisdom" to realize a world without nuclear weapons, as the city marked the 71st anniversary of its atomic bombing by the United States in the final stages of World War II.

In his Peace Declaration delivered at an annual ceremony in the city's Peace Park, Taue said new frameworks aimed at containing nuclear proliferation are necessary if mankind is to be prevented from destroying its future. "Now is the time for all of you to bring together as much of your collective wisdom as you possibly can, and act," he said.

Touching on a U.N. working group on nuclear disarmament being held in Geneva, Taue said the creation of the forum to recommend legal measures to bring about nuclear weapons abolition is "a huge step forward."

But noting the absence of many of the nuclear powers at the debate, he said that without their participation, the discussions "will end without the creation of a road map for nuclear weapons abolition."

Compared to a similar declaration issued by Hiroshima Mayor Kazumi Matsui three days earlier on the occasion of his city's own anniversary of its 1945 atomic bombing by the United States, Taue was more blunt in both his suggestions for steps to achieve a nuclear-free world and his criticism of the Japanese government.

Taue criticized Japan's policy of advocating the elimination of nuclear weapons while relying on the United States for nuclear deterrence, calling it "contradictory." He also urged the government to enshrine into law its three non-nuclear principles of not producing, possessing or allowing nuclear weapons on Japanese territory, which are currently non-binding.

He further pressed the government to work to create what he called a "Northeast Asia Nuclear Weapons-Free Zone" as a security framework that does not rely on nuclear deterrence.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, in his speech, vowed to continue to make various efforts to bring about a "world free of nuclear weapons," without referring to any concrete steps. His statements were almost identical to those he delivered during a similar ceremony in Hiroshima on Saturday.

Taue touched on the significance of U.S. President Barack Obama's historic visit to Hiroshima in May, and called on the leaders of every country to visit Nagasaki and Hiroshima to see the reality of atomic bombings.

Through his visit, the president exhibited to the world "the importance of seeing, listening, and feeling things for oneself," Taue said, adding, "Knowing the facts becomes the starting point for thinking about a future free of nuclear weapons."

Obama was the first sitting U.S. president to visit Hiroshima.

Taue, meanwhile, called on younger generations to listen to the testimonies of atomic-bomb survivors. He also expressed his support for areas affected by the 2011 Fukushima No. 1 nuclear power plant disaster.

At 11:02 a.m., the exact time the bomb detonated over Nagasaki 71 years ago, participants at the ceremony offered silent prayers for the victims of the nuclear attack.

Three days after Hiroshima, the United States dropped a second nuclear bomb on Nagasaki on Aug. 9, 1945. An estimated 74,000 people were killed by the end of the year.

The number of hibakusha — atomic bomb survivors with documents certifying that they experienced the nuclear attacks in 1945 — at home and abroad stood at 174,080 as of March, and their average age was 80.86. The Nagasaki city government has confirmed the deaths of 3,487 hibakusha over the past year, bringing the death toll to 172,230.

Who is worried about "no first use" of nukes?

August 14, 2016

Opposition to US 'No First Use' nuclear proposal

http://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20160814_09/

The Wall Street Journal says a proposal under consideration by US President Barack Obama to declare a protocol of "No First Use" for nuclear weapons is running into opposition from top cabinet officials and US allies.

The paper reported Friday that the allies include Japan, South Korea and Britain. It says that during a National Security Council meeting in July, US Secretary of State John Kerry raised concerns by allies that rely on the American nuclear triad for their security.

It reports that Secretary of Defense Ash Carter also said a "No First Use" declaration risked provoking insecurity about the US deterrent among allies, some of which could pursue their own nuclear programs.

A "No First Use" protocol would mean that the US would explicitly rule out a first strike with a nuclear weapon in any conflict.

The paper says Obama didn't make a decision about the policy at the meeting. But it quotes people familiar with the discussions as saying "opposition from the critical cabinet members and US allies reduces the likelihood of the change".

Obama is reportedly planning to make nuclear issues a focus of his speech to the UN General Assembly next month.

Government not pushing hard enough

August 11, 2016

As Japan marks atomic bombings, Abe condemned for inaction

by Satoshi Iizuka

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2016/08/11/national/japan-marks-atomic-bombings-abe-condemned-inaction/#.V623f6Jdeos>

Kyodo

NAGASAKI – As Japan marked the 71st anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki this month, the mayors of the two cities urged world leaders to follow in the footsteps of U.S. President Barack Obama's trip to Hiroshima in May, and act to rid the world of nuclear arms..

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has echoed the mayors' calls, but has stopped short of putting forward concrete steps for abolishing nuclear weapons, attracting criticism from atomic bomb survivors and peace activists.

This is not the first time that Hiroshima and Nagasaki have called on leaders to visit and listen to the accounts of survivors, but the calls this year were stronger than ever as the cities believe such visits can be used as a springboard to realize their goal of a world without nuclear weapons.

Obama, who became the first sitting U.S. president to visit Hiroshima on May 27, used his speech there to urge nuclear powers to have the courage to escape the logic of fear and pursue a nuclear-free world.

In his speech during the city's commemorative ceremony Saturday, Hiroshima Mayor Kazumi Matsui said it's clear Obama was touched by "the spirit of Hiroshima" and its refusal to accept nuclear weapons, while

Nagasaki Mayor Tomihisa Taue said Tuesday in his city's ceremony that the president "showed the rest of the world the importance of seeing, listening and feeling things for oneself."

This year, the annual ceremony in Hiroshima drew representatives from 91 nations and the European Union. The figure was the second-highest on record after 100 nations were represented last year on the 70th anniversary of the atomic bombing, the municipal government said.

Tetsuo Kaneko, 68, one of the representatives of the Hiroshima Congress against A- and H-Bombs, said learning about the realities of the atomic bombings was the starting point of the anti-nuclear movement in Japan. "In that sense, Obama's visit was meaningful" as it highlighted what the city experienced, he said. "If you see exhibits at the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum, you can immediately understand that nuclear weapons . . . should never exist," said Teruko Yamane, a 74-year-old atomic bomb survivor in Hiroshima who was 3 years old when the world's first nuclear bomb was used on Aug. 6, 1945, near her grandmother's house where she was staying.

"I'm frustrated by the fact that nuclear weapons are yet to be abolished," said Yamane, who lost her younger sister in the blast. The museum displays various artifacts and items belonging to the victims. There are still some 15,400 nuclear weapons in the world as of January, according to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute.

Hiroko Takahashi, a visiting researcher at the International Peace Research Institute of Meiji Gakuin University and an expert in American history, said the reality of atomic bombings is not well known in the United States, which can be attributed in part to the type of media coverage the event received.

According to Takahashi, the human impact of nuclear weapons is not explicitly covered by U.S. media. While they often show images of mushroom clouds and collapsing buildings, images of charred remains or bodies damaged by radiation are rarely shown.

Reporting on how the effects of radiation can last for generations is rare, she said.

This lack of knowledge about the impact of atomic bombs on the human body explains why the idea of nuclear deterrence is tolerated, Takahashi said, which is why it's so important for Hiroshima and Nagasaki to keep telling the world what actually happened "under the mushroom cloud."

Kaneko said that some members of the peace group were annoyed that the U.S. leader did not take enough time to see the Hiroshima museum and listen to the testimony of hibakusha.

During his visit to Hiroshima, Obama stopped at the museum for only around 10 minutes before giving his speech and met briefly with several hibakusha.

But Kaneko says Obama's visit has served to highlight the inaction of the Japanese government when it comes to global moves to abolish nuclear arms.

Recent news reports said the administration of Obama plans to submit a resolution to the U.N. Security Council, possibly in September, to call for a ban on the testing of nuclear weapons, and that it is also considering declaring a "no first use" policy for the U.S. nuclear arsenal.

"Unfortunately, the Japanese government is not responding to this move," Kaneko said, adding it is now clear that the government is more inclined to strengthen the Japan-U.S. alliance, which includes nuclear deterrence, than to eliminate nuclear weapons.

At a meeting with representatives of local atomic bomb survivors' groups in Hiroshima on Saturday, Abe was urged to work for a treaty to ban nuclear weapons, but he stopped short of outlining Japan's position on the issue.

On Aug. 5, the final session of the U.N. nuclear disarmament working group opened in Geneva to discuss a legal framework to ban nuclear weapons. Japan is participating in the talks, but is adopting a negative stance toward the planned legal framework banning nuclear arsenals.

Tokyo, which is under the nuclear umbrella of the United States, sees the outlawing of nuclear arms as a radical approach, although it hopes for a world free of nuclear weapons one day.

Imari Yasuno, a 16-year-old high school student from Nagasaki and member of a student group for nuclear abolition, said she felt “indignation” about her government’s inaction. “(It) should be embarrassed to face hibakusha as it is wasting their experiences.”

Yasuno was among some 100 invitees to the Hiroshima ceremony at which Obama delivered his historic speech. Although she found the speech somewhat abstract, she said she felt more responsible than ever to work for the elimination of nuclear weapons after seeing the thousands of people who lined the route of the president’s motorcade.

When she delivers a speech as a student peace ambassador at the U.N. conference on disarmament in Geneva later this month, she intends to promote the slogan used by hibakusha in her city: “Nagasaki must be the last.”

If the government is not pushing forward with the issue, she said, “then youth like us must.”

Nuclear Watch: Pushing for a nuclear-free world

<http://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/videos/20160809141419587/>

Abe worried about "no first use" policy

August 16, 2016

Abe tells U.S. of Japan’s concerns over ‘no first use’ nuke policy being mulled by Obama

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2016/08/16/national/politics-diplomacy/abe-tells-u-s-japans-concerns-obama-mulled-no-first-use-uke-policy/#.V7Lx56Jdeos>

Kyodo

WASHINGTON – Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has expressed concern over the possible nuclear weapons policy of “no first use” being considered by the Obama administration, according to a column in the Monday edition of the Washington Post.

Citing a weakening of deterrence against countries such as North Korea, Abe conveyed his concern to Adm. Harry Harris, commander of the U.S. Pacific Command, columnist Josh Rogin wrote, quoting two U.S. government officials.

Rogin said Abe “personally” conveyed the message to Harris “recently,” without providing details. But the two are likely to have discussed the issue during a meeting July 26 at the Prime Minister’s Office in Tokyo. Quoting U.S. officials, foreign diplomats and nuclear experts, the column said U.S. allies such as Japan, South Korea, France and Britain have privately communicated their concerns about a potential declaration by President Barack Obama of such a policy.

“Japan, in particular, believes that if Obama declares a ‘no first use’ policy, deterrence against countries such as North Korea will suffer and the risks of conflict will rise,” according to the column headlined “Allies unite to block Obama ‘legacy.’”

If Obama were to declare a no first use policy, it would represent a landmark change in the U.S. nuclear posture.

A Japanese government source was noncommittal about the report, saying Tuesday in Tokyo, "The United States is studying (its options), and as it is still in the middle of making a policy decision, (Japan) cannot comment on every news report."

Given that he will leave office in January, Obama is reportedly considering taking steps to reduce the role of nuclear weapons with an eye to their eventual abolition, as he pledged in his landmark speech in 2009 in Prague.

However, Rogin wrote that an Obama administration official told him that, in part because of allied concerns, the internal push on no first use "was not gaining traction."

According to the column, diplomats from allied countries argued that if the United States takes a nuclear first strike off the table, the risk of a conventional conflict with countries such as North Korea, China and Russia could increase.

"Moreover, allied governments don't believe that a unilateral 'no first use' declaration would necessarily help to establish an international norm, because there's no guarantee that other countries would follow suit," it said.

Along with a potential no first use declaration, the Obama administration is considering reducing the budget for modernizing U.S. nuclear weapons and calling for a ban on testing nuclear weapons in a resolution it plans to submit to the U.N. Security Council, possibly next month, according to U.S. government officials.

Survivors of the U.S. atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945 and members of anti-nuclear groups expressed their anger over the Abe government's opposition to Obama's move, saying it runs counter to their efforts to eliminate nuclear weapons.

"North Korea repeatedly conducts nuclear tests. Deterrence is not working," said Kazuo Okoshi, 76, secretary-general of an A-bomb survivors group, challenging Abe's position that the existing U.S. nuclear posture is effective at deterring the threat from Pyongyang.

North Korea carried out its fourth nuclear test in January.

Not to worry, says US

August 17, 2016

US says it will maintain nuclear deterrence

http://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20160817_12/

A State Department spokesperson says the United States will continue to maintain a credible deterrent for itself and its allies, while seeking to diminish the role of nuclear weapons in security strategy.

Mark Toner made the remark on Tuesday. He was responding to concerns about a media report that President Barack Obama is considering a proposal to declare a policy of "No First Use" of nuclear weapons.

The report said top US government officials as well as Japan and other allies had expressed concern about such a move.

Toner referred to Obama's landmark speech in Prague in 2009 that urged a path toward a world without nuclear weapons.

He said the Obama administration will assess whether there are possible additional steps that can be taken to reduce the role of nuclear weapons and strengthen the global nonproliferation regime.

Toner did not comment directly on whether the administration is considering a "No First Use" policy.

Hiroshima/Nagasaki students call for abolition

August 17, 2016

UN confab: Japanese high school students appeal

http://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20160817_04/

Students from atomic-bombed cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki have delivered a speech at the UN Conference on Disarmament, calling for the abolition of nuclear weapons.

Twenty-two senior high school students attended the international meeting on Tuesday in Geneva, Switzerland.

A senior student, Nanako Nagaishi from Nagasaki, gave a speech on behalf of the others.

18-year-old Nagaishi invited people to listen to the voices of atomic-bomb sufferers. She asked them to pay attention to the inhumanity of nuclear weapons.

Nagaishi said she firmly believes that if young people like her and her colleagues join hands, something can be done to prompt people around the world to pave a path for abolishing nuclear weapons.

After the speech, the students visited the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs to hand over letters from the mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki to the UN officials.

The students also handed over a list of signatures by over 125,000 people seeking abolition of nuclear weapons, together with paper cranes.

North Korea resumes plutonium production

August 17, 2016

N. Korea confirms restart of plutonium production

<http://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20160817/p2g/00m/0in/096000c>

PYONGYANG (Kyodo) -- North Korea confirmed Wednesday it has resumed plutonium production and said it has no plans to stop nuclear tests as long as perceived threats from the United States continue. "We have reprocessed spent nuclear fuel rods removed from a graphite-moderated reactor," the Atomic Energy Institute, which holds jurisdiction over North Korea's main nuclear facilities at the Yongbyon complex, said in a written interview with Kyodo News.

In its first-ever response to foreign media questions, the institute also said North Korea has been producing highly enriched uranium necessary for nuclear arms and power "as scheduled."

The institute, however, stopped short of disclosing the amount of plutonium or enriched uranium North Korea has produced, saying it wants to leave that to the assessments of Western experts.

There had been some indications of renewed activity at the nuclear complex, cited by foreign officials and security experts based on satellite imagery in recent months.

In February, U.S. intelligence chief James Clapper said in a report to Congress that North Korea could recover plutonium, the core material of a nuclear bomb, from the reactor's spent fuel within weeks to months.

The comments from the Atomic Energy Institute mark the first clear confirmation by North Korea of the new reprocessing since it vowed in 2013 to restart the 5 megawatt reactor and other nuclear facilities at the key complex that were shut down under an agreement reached in the six-party talks in 2007.

The resumption of the program means that North Korea will be able to produce more nuclear weapons, although it has been subjected to multiple U.N. sanctions for its tests of atomic and missile technologies.

The research center did not rule out the possibility of conducting a fifth nuclear test and claimed that North Korea has already succeeded in "minimizing, making lighter and diversifying" nuclear weapons.

"Under conditions that the United States constantly threatens us with nuclear weapons, we will not discontinue nuclear tests," it said.

Abe should back "no first use"

August 19, 2016

EDITORIAL: Abe should be backing Obama's 'no first use' nuclear proposal

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201608190028.html>

The nuclear "no first use" principle means a country will not use nuclear weapons unless it is first attacked by an enemy using nuclear arms.

U.S. President Barack Obama is said to be considering adopting this policy. But Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has conveyed his opposition to such a move to Adm. Harry Harris Jr., head of the U.S. Pacific Command, according to a recent report by The Washington Post.

The report said Abe expressed concerns that if Obama declares a "no first use" policy, deterrence against North Korea will suffer and the risks of conflict will rise.

The Japanese government has made no official comment on the report, and it is not clear if Abe really made these remarks.

The Japanese government's traditional position has been that it cannot support the "no first use" policy because it would undermine deterrence of the nuclear umbrella.

Talking to The Asahi Shimbun about the report, a senior Foreign Ministry official said: "If the U.S. administration declares no first use of nuclear weapons, there can be no extended deterrence provided by the United States to protect Japan. That's not going to happen."

For Japan, which once suffered nuclear devastation, this stance is too backward-looking to take.

There can be no winner or loser in a nuclear war.

And the risk of nuclear warfare cannot be eliminated as long as nations depend on nuclear deterrence for their security.

A major nuclear power's attempt to reduce the role of nuclear arms in national security is a boost to efforts to prevent nuclear proliferation.

A harsh assessment of the security environment is necessary. But many experts argue that conventional weapons of the U.S. military offer sufficient deterrence against North Korea and other countries.

In his speech in Hiroshima three months ago, Obama said, "We must have the courage to escape the logic of fear and pursue a world without them (nuclear weapons)."

Abe, who stood beside Obama in Hiroshima, should cooperate actively with the president in his bid to promote the policy of "no first use."

In addition to Japan, South Korea, which is also protected by the U.S. nuclear umbrella, and two nuclear powers--Britain and France--have communicated their concerns about the change in the U.S. nuclear-weapons policy, according to The Washington Post.

On the other hand, a group of former government officials of Asia-Pacific countries, including former Foreign Minister Yoriko Kawaguchi and former Australian Foreign Minister Gareth Evans, recently released a joint statement calling on the Obama administration to pledge never to be the first to use nuclear weapons and urging Japan and other U.S. allies to support the policy.

Japan, which has first-hand experiences of the ravages of nuclear attacks, should never take action that hinders any global trend toward a world without nuclear weapons.

Japan's foreign policy should be focused on efforts to realize a security system not dependent on the nuclear umbrella. Tokyo should declare its will to pursue that goal and hold serious negotiations with Washington to achieve it.

Such efforts would enhance Japan's moral position and contribute to stability and peace in the region.

In Hiroshima, Abe pledged to "continue to make efforts" to realize a world without nuclear weapons.

Abe needs to offer a clear vision and take concrete actions to deliver on his promise.

--The Asahi Shimbun, Aug. 19

Hibakusha group backs nuclear arms 'no first use'

http://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20160819_02/

A senior official of Japan's national organization of atomic bomb survivors says opposition to no first use of nuclear weapons rejects the feelings of hibakusha and many others in the nation.

The Secretary General of Nihon Hidankyo, Terumi Tanaka, issued a statement on Thursday.

A US newspaper article says President Barack Obama may adopt a possible shift of US policy to no first use of nuclear weapons. US cabinet officials as well as Japan and other allies are reportedly concerned

about the potential change in policy.

Tanaka said the US has not been ruling out the possibility of first use of nuclear arms. He said it would be half a step forward if the US shifts its policy to no first use of nuclear weapons.

Tanaka said the only way to prevent a nuclear war is to totally do away with nuclear weapons.

He added that the prime minister of the only nation to have suffered atomic bombings should commit himself to abolishing nuclear weapons to make a safe and peaceful world.

Toward a world without nuclear weapons?

August 20, 2016

U.N. body call for end to atomic weapons puts disarmament pressure on nuke powers

<http://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20160820/p2a/00m/0na/003000c>

Nuclear powers are facing mounting international pressure to work toward nuclear arms reductions as a United Nations working group adopted a report on Aug. 19 urging the global community to pursue a world without atomic weapons.

- **【Related】** U.N. panel seeks push toward nuclear disarmament
- **【Related】** Nations supporting nuclear disarmament talks grow to over 100

A total of 107 non-nuclear powers that are not under the U.S. nuclear umbrella are aiming to launch negotiations on a treaty to ban nuclear weapons. However, talks at the U.N. working group highlighted a rift between these nations and U.S. allies such as Japan and European countries covered by the U.S. nuclear arsenal. Unofficial talks on the wording of the report had originally been scheduled to end on Aug. 18, but lasted until the following day.

An ambassador representing a pro-ban country pointed out on the evening of Aug. 18 that Japan, Europe and other nations wanted to state in the report that not all participating countries agree with starting negotiations on such a treaty.

Japan, which relies on the U.S. nuclear deterrent, faces a severe security environment in northeastern Asia, such as North Korea's nuclear and missile programs. U.S. tactical nuclear missiles have been deployed to North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) members Italy and Germany. Fellow NATO nation Poland and other Eastern European countries also regard Russia as a serious threat.

As such, Japan and the NATO countries underscored the need to achieve a balance between nuclear arms reductions and concerns about their national security, and to gain consensus from nuclear powers on arms reductions.

However, these countries have come under fire from nongovernmental organizations for speaking for nuclear powers' interests. Some countries promoting a nuclear weapons ban treaty argued that the security and safety of human beings should be prioritized over national interests. At the end of the

negotiations, Japan expressed its willingness to cooperate in forming a consensus on the issue among relevant parties.

Japan and European countries initially opposed a phrase in a draft report stating that a majority of countries support the start of talks on a nuclear arms ban treaty by the end of next year. However, countries in Central and South America, Africa, Southeast Asia and other regions expressed support for an early start to negotiations.

On Aug. 19, an Australian official spoke on behalf of 14 countries that oppose the start of negotiations, but Japan did not join this group.

Treaty supporters gained momentum as recent discussions on the issue shed light on the inhumanity of nuclear weapons, and nuclear arms reductions are now widely recognized as an issue important to not only nuclear powers but all countries, as Mexican Ambassador to the U.N. Jorge Lomonaco pointed out. Setsuko Thurlow, 84, an atomic bombing survivor living in Canada, told a U.N. working group meeting in May that the group's mission is to warn the world of the inhumane reality of nuclear weapons, and that nuclear disarmament will enable human survival. Her message gave many non-nuclear powers a supportive push.

The move to adopt a nuclear weapons ban treaty began in 1997, when Costa Rica submitted a model plan to the U.N. The Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons was held in Oslo in 2013. It was then decided at a U.N. General Assembly session in December last year to hold the latest working group meeting.

Beatrice Fihn, executive director of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), emphasizes that moves to adopt a ban treaty will force all countries involved to choose whether to accept nuclear weapons or not.

Sri Lanka expressed support for the start of negotiations on Aug. 17, bringing the number of those in favor of a treaty to 107. However, officially recognized nuclear powers -- the United States, Russia, Britain, France and China -- as well as India, Pakistan and others that possess or are believed to possess such arms did not participate in the working group meeting. Even if negotiations were to be launched, a ban could end up a pie in the sky as nuclear powers are highly unlikely to participate.

Therefore, Japan and Germany have warned that the international framework for nuclear non-proliferation, arms reductions and security arrangements based on the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) could be undermined.

In fact, **nuclear arms reductions depend on nuclear powers.** The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) was adopted in 1996, but has not come into force because the U.S. and other countries have not ratified the pact. Nuclear arms reductions between the United States and Russia have stalled because of differences over the Ukrainian crisis and the Syrian civil war.

Still, countries promoting an atomic weapons ban view the current situation as an opportunity for non-nuclear powers to take the initiative from nuclear powers. This is because non-nuclear powers, through efforts to hammer out a ban treaty, can pressure nuclear powers to reduce their atomic arsenals.

Coalitions of willing nations and citizens groups have played a leading role in arms reductions in recent years, such as the 1999 Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction, and the Convention on Cluster Munitions, which took effect in 2010.

However, the situation of nuclear weapons owned by a handful of countries is different from that of landmines and cluster munitions, which are held by numerous nations.

Still, ICAN's Fihn has expressed hope that support for a nuclear weapons ban will spread, pointing out that many countries that had initially been skeptical of treaties banning landmines and cluster munitions now support these pacts.

However, the adoption of the U.N. working group report is just the beginning of efforts toward a world without nuclear weapons, as Mexican Ambassador Lomonaco says. The report cites the possession, use, stockpiling, deployment and extension of loans for the development and production of nuclear weapons as possible actions that would be banned by such a treaty.

Numerous challenges must be overcome, such as how to strengthen international opinion in favor of a nuclear arms ban towards actual treaty negotiations.

See also : <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2016/08/20/national/u-n-panel-backs-starting-negotiations-ban-nuclear-weapons/>

Abe justifies himself on "no first use"

Abe disputes relaying doubts on U.S. 'no first use' nuke policy

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201608210016.html>

By TAKAHIRO OKUBO/ Staff Writer

August 21, 2016 at 13:45 JST

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe on Aug. 20 flatly denied a Washington Post story that had him personally relaying his concerns about the United States adopting a "no first use" policy for its nuclear arsenal.

The Aug. 15 edition of The Washington Post said Abe "personally conveyed" his concerns to Adm. Harry Harris, commander of the United States Pacific Command, about the decreased deterrence against North Korea if Washington adopted a no first use policy.

Abe told reporters on Aug. 20 at Haneda Airport, "I never discussed a possible no first use of its nuclear weapons by the United States in my meeting with Adm. Harris. I have no idea why such a report came about."

Abe added, "I visited Hiroshima with U.S. President Barack Obama and expressed my resolve through a strong message about working toward a world without nuclear weapons."

Abe accompanied Obama to the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park on May 27 when he became the first sitting U.S. president to visit the city devastated by the first atomic bomb dropped on Aug. 6, 1945.

At the same time, Abe stopped short of presenting his own view about a possible no first use policy.

"The United States has not yet made any decision about a no first use policy," Abe said. "We want to continue communicating closely with the U.S. government in the future."

Abe made his statements before boarding the special government plane that took him to Rio de Janeiro to attend the closing ceremony of the Olympics.

Listen to the dead and their anti-war words

August 22, 2016

EDITORIAL: We must keep listening to the dead and their anti-war words

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201608220032.html>

August offers many opportunities for Japanese to think deeply about people who have departed this life. In addition to the anniversaries of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the end of World War II, Bon, a Buddhist festival to honor the spirits of ancestors, is also held in August.

This summer marks the 71st anniversary of Japan's defeat in the war.

The past year has seen the deaths of public figures who continuously delivered their anti-war, pacifist messages based on their personal experiences through the broadcast and print media. Let us recall what they said.

MESSAGE ON RADIO

This summer, again, a children's story titled "Kawaiso na zo (Poor elephants)," read by critic Chieko Akiyama, was broadcast on a Japanese radio station.

It is based on a true story about elephants in a zoo that were killed during the war.

For more than four decades, Akiyama read the story in her radio program every year on Aug. 15, the day the war ended. She died in April this year at the age of 99, but her legacy has been kept alive.

Akiyama first got involved in radio broadcasting before the war. But she moved to China after marriage and restarted her career as a radio personality only after the war ended.

During the Allied occupation of Japan, under the supervision of the Civil Information and Education Section of the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, Akiyama talked about everyday and current topics in a Japan Broadcasting Corp. (NHK) radio program aimed at enlightening women.

She then hosted a radio program aired by TBS Radio Inc. from 1957 to 2005.

If she had been in Japan during the war, "I might have called on people to fight for the nation on radio," she once said.

She didn't like to prerecord her program because "unless I broadcast live, when Japan is about to get involved in a war again, I wouldn't be able to urge people to voice their opposition."

This remark reflects the practical view of a person who had first-hand experience of how broadcasting was used for national propaganda and how it was censored by the occupation authorities.

Some famous Japanese men who were born in the first nine years of Showa Era (1926-1989) and witnessed the war as young boys, have also recently died.

Writer Akiyuki Nosaka, who liked to describe himself as a person who grew up amid the black markets that appeared in the rubble of war, died in December at the age of 85.

When he was 14, Nosaka survived the devastating air raid on Kobe by the U.S. forces.

He later wrote a novel titled "Hotaru no Haka" (Grave of the Fireflies), which was based on his own experience of losing his younger sister to malnutrition.

Through its moving depictions of his harrowing wartime experiences, the story conveys to all generations the message that the weak, like elderly people and children, suffer the most in war.

Nosaka continued expressing his anti-war message even after he fell seriously ill in 2003. Just before his death, he sounded the alarm in a letter he wrote for a radio program containing the following passage:

Since Japan was "reborn as a pacifist nation overnight, it could become a militarist nation overnight, a country that is ready to fight a war under the pretext of protecting peace."

Rokusuke Ei, who received this letter, died in July at the age of 83.

A man of versatile talent who was active in such areas as songwriting and literature, Ei kept traveling around the nation and reporting on people's lives in his radio program throughout his life.

He voluntarily served as a self-claimed “cheerleader” for various people in weak positions and responded with humor to questionable actions by the powers-that-be.

For instance, he campaigned for the revival of the traditional Japanese measuring system known as “shakkanho,” from “shaku,” a unit for measuring length, and “kan,” a unit for measuring weight.

The measurement law banned the use of this system, putting traditional Japanese craftsmen in serious trouble. Ei talked about the absurdity of the law in humorous ways on radio or on the stage. His campaign eventually led to the government’s lifting of the ban.

LOYAL TO HIS PERSONAL VIEWS AND VALUES

Kyosen Ohashi, a TV personality who was instrumental in creating some hugely popular programs, including “11 PM,” also died last month. He was 82.

Ohashi was 11 years old when Japan was defeated in the war. He witnessed how wartime nationalist values, which essentially obliged Japanese citizens to be prepared to die for the nation, quickly reversed after the end of the war.

Like other Japanese boys at that time, Ohashi had been instilled with these values.

When a nation gets involved in a war, its people are forced to support the views and policies adopted by the government. People are usually denied freedom and banned from enjoying leisure activities.

Ohashi lived in a manner that was the complete opposite of Japanese people’s wartime lives. He introduced such leisure activities as golf, horse racing and mahjongg into his TV programs. He semi-retired in his 50s and indulged himself in his hobbies.

In 2001, he successfully ran in an Upper House election as a candidate of the Democratic Party of Japan. But he resigned after only half a year because he was opposed to the government’s decision to deploy Self-Defense Forces overseas, which his party supported. Ohashi argued that the government’s explanation about the deployment was insufficient, saying, “There is a red line I can never cross as a person who experienced war.”

The current administration of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has been very nervous about TV reporting. Abe criticized a news program as “biased” for reporting views different from those of the government. The administration has been emphatically calling for “political neutrality” of TV programs.

Apparently as a result, TV coverage of the July 10 Upper House election was significantly reduced compared with coverage of the previous election.

The ruling Liberal Democratic Party’s committee also invited the public to report possible violations of political neutrality at schools.

Initially, the committee cited as an example a teacher who had argued against sending children to battlegrounds.

Despite the constitutional guarantee of freedom of speech and thought, a stifling atmosphere that could deter dissenting voices is permeating society.

Japanese people are under growing pressure to conform, and they are finding it hard to open their mouths because of a judgmental public.

Ohashi refused to conform to a group or suppress his doubts and suspicions. He remained loyal to his personality and his own views and values. His life raises many important questions about today’s Japan.

SHARPENING THE ABILITY TO LISTEN

How can we hear the voices of the dead? Kan Hosho, a renowned “waki” supporting actor in Noh plays who died in February at the age of 81, made illustrating remarks about the topic.

In many Noh plays, a departed soul is the “shite,” or the leading character, while the waki is a traveling Buddhist monk who finds himself listening to the dead talk about their thoughts and feelings of the world.

"A Buddhist monk has curiosity and love of learning," Hosho pointed out. "That's why the shite talks about himself to (a Buddhist monk)."

The Noh player continued: "If you don't have enough knowledge about history and literature, you can't understand what they say. When a ghost that has taken the trouble of becoming visible encounters an ignorant listener who doesn't know what 'Isemonogatari' (The Tales of Ise) is, he would be dismayed. Ghosts should only appear to people who can understand their stories."

The messages of the dead can only reach people who have the will and wisdom to understand what they try to say.

We all need to sharpen our ability to understand their messages so that we can learn from the past and think correctly about the future.

--The Asahi Shimbun, Aug. 21

Ramesh Thakur on "no first use"

August 22, 2016

A 'no first use' policy' is safer

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2016/08/22/commentary/japan-commentary/no-first-use-policy-safer/#.V7v6w6Jdeot>

by Ramesh Thakur

CANBERRA – As reported in this paper on Aug. 17, there is strong opposition in Japanese government circles as well as among some nuclear policy experts to the possible declaration of a "no first use" policy by the U.S. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe is said to have conveyed personally to Adm. Harry Harris, the head of U.S. Pacific Command, that deterrence against countries such as North Korea will be jeopardized and the risks of conflict would rise. If these reports are true, Abe needs new advisers. North Korea can be razed and turned into a car park with massive U.S. conventional strikes — there is no need to use nukes. A "pure" no first use policy limits the use of nuclear weapons to retaliation after nuclear attacks. A qualified no first use policy permits nuclear retaliation against attack by any weapon of mass destruction (nuclear, chemical, biological), but not conventional weapons. Successive official documents have explained the role of U.S. nuclear weapons is to deter a wide range of threats on the U.S. and its allies, with WMD or large-scale conventional forces. The 2010 Nuclear Posture Review did acknowledge that the role of U.S. nuclear weapons in deterring non-nuclear attacks was continuing to diminish as the ability to deal with them using increasingly accurate and powerful conventional munitions increases.

Now there is a buzz in Washington policy circles and the arms control community that in the endgame of his presidency, Barack Obama may, as commander-in-chief, unilaterally declare, perhaps during his final address to the U.N. General Assembly next month, either a pure or a qualified no first use U.S. nuclear policy. Contrary to Tokyo's officialdom, such a policy change would make Japan, the region and the world safer. The balance of risks and gains decisively favors a no first use policy. A continuation of the status quo rests on underestimating the dangers of first-use policies while exaggerating the risks of no first use.

The U.S. is in a league of its own, and will remain so for decades to come, in the massive superiority of conventional forces. This has bred cockiness to the extent of promoting what Obama calls the Washington playbook of militarized responses to any foreign policy crisis, even those where U.S. vital interests are not engaged.

The comforting security blanket of first use of nuclear weapons by the U.S. to defend an ally under attack by conventional weapons is bereft of any operational meaning. Allies who fear attacks by China or Russia and insist on first use policy as insurance are asking the U.S. to cross the nuclear threshold against an enemy with a guaranteed capacity to survive an initial nuclear strike and hit back at the U.S. with nuclear weapons. Any use of nuclear weapons in such circumstances would open the gates to hell whose all-consuming flames would know no geographical borders.

The logic of survival dictates that a nuclear war resulting from a first use of nuclear weapons would be infinitely worse than defeat in a conventional war, even for a weaker state in a conflict dyad like, say, Pakistan vis-a-vis India. Fear of a rapid nuclear escalation makes the threat of first use against nuclear rivals is not credible and a non-credible threat has little deterrent value.

No sensible policymaker in Beijing or Tokyo wants a war. But incidents in the maritime flashpoints have given cause for alarm that the two could find themselves locked in an escalation spiral beyond their control. A similar spiral has once again become imaginable also in Europe since the 2014 Ukraine crisis. Government leaders in Beijing (as in Tokyo) will scramble desperately to contain the spiraling crisis because they fear the military and economic costs of a China-Japan war. No Chinese military planner or national security decision-maker is likely to contemplate a U.S. nuclear first strike as having anything other than zero prospect.

At present Russia and the U.S. hold about 1,800 nuclear warheads in a state of high operational alert, ready to launch on warning of an incoming enemy attack. In an escalating crisis directly between China and the U.S., Beijing policymakers confront two additional complications compared to China-Japan.

First, they worry that growing U.S. military capability is making some Americans believe they can decapitate China's retaliatory nuclear capability by a surprise attack, and are considering putting some of China's own nuclear warheads on high alert to strengthen U.S. belief in China's retaliatory second-strike capability. This would almost certainly lead to an abandonment of China's no first use policy.

Second, with U.S. first use policy, Beijing might give in earlier to the temptation to strike first in order to preempt a U.S. attack.

Conversely, with a no first use policy, Washington could consider de-alerting all nuclear weapons, withdrawing those stationed in Europe and eliminating land-based strategic missiles. It could also lead a push with China and India to negotiate a global convention on no first use. With a declaratory U.S. policy backed by follow-up operational measures, others would be a little bit more confident about not being subjected to a disarming first strike.

I am not aware of any other weapon, known to be extremely destructive, that has been held in the arsenals of several countries without use for seven decades, despite many wars in which some of the countries with the powerful weapons were defeated by others without them.

One of the biggest reasons for nuclear non-use is the moral cost of crossing the nuclear threshold against non-nuclear threats. Developments in conventional munitions technology and miniaturization of nuclear weapons have begun to blur the boundary between the two. In addition, irresponsible reminders by Russian leaders since the Ukraine crisis of their nuclear arsenal have sought to legitimize the role of nuclear weapons.

Against this worrying backdrop, if the U.S. joins China and India in declaring a no first use policy, the conventional-nuclear psychological firewall will be reinforced and the norm of non-use of nuclear weapons will be strengthened.

Nuke ban a bit closer?

August 23, 2016

Editorial: Nuke ban becomes one step closer, but challenges remain

<http://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20160823/p2a/00m/0na/005000c>

A significant step has been made toward the realization of a world without nuclear weapons.

- **【Related】** U.N. body call for end to atomic weapons puts disarmament pressure on nuke powers
- **【Related】** U.N. panel seeks push toward nuclear disarmament
- **【Related】** Nations supporting nuclear disarmament talks grow to over 100

The United Nations' Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) on nuclear disarmament adopted a report recommending the U.N. General Assembly to start negotiations on a treaty banning nuclear weapons before the end of 2017.

A recommendation with a specific start-by date is a reflection of heightened international public opinion seeking the signing of a treaty banning the use of nuclear weapons, focusing on their inhumane nature. The vote, however, was not unanimous. Of the member states, 68 voted for the recommendation while 22 voted against and 13 abstained. Japan, along with such countries as Switzerland and Sweden, abstained from voting, hinting at the rocky road that lies ahead before a worldwide nuclear ban can be enforced. Such countries as Mexico and Austria, which voted in favor of the recommendation, were the same countries that led the move to establish the working group. Frustrated by the breakdown of the 2015 review conference on the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons -- commonly known as the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) -- these countries seek a speedy conclusion to the negotiations. Meanwhile, Japan, Australia, and NATO countries, which are dependent on the U.S.'s nuclear umbrella, take the position that in the interest of security, nuclear disarmament should take place in stages, and that it is too soon for a global nuclear ban to be instituted at the moment.

Even among countries that argue for a gradual approach to nuclear disarmament, there were differences in how they voted in the working group: Australia, South Korea and Germany voted against the recommendation, while Japan, as mentioned earlier, abstained from voting. There exist layers upon layers of gaps among non-nuclear members.

When it comes to non-nuclear member states and nuclear member states -- the U.S., Russia, Britain, France and China -- the gaps are even wider. In protest of a nuclear ban, nuclear member states did not attend a single session of the working group held in February, May and August of this year.

The recommendation will be submitted to the fall session of the U.N. General Assembly. Alongside the submission of the recommendation, Mexico, among other members, is expected to make a motion to pass a resolution to begin negotiations. A majority of 107 U.N. member states are said to be in support of starting negotiations, indicating that there is a sufficient chance that the resolution will be passed.

As it continues to appeal to the rest of the world of its status as the only country that has ever experienced nuclear bombing, Japan, which relies on the U.S. nuclear umbrella, has claimed that it would serve as a bridge between nuclear and non-nuclear members. As the Japanese delegation's abstention shows, however, fulfilling that role has been extremely difficult.

The content of the nuclear weapons ban treaty has not yet been established. What countries such as Mexico have in mind is a treaty that restricts only non-nuclear states from using or possessing nuclear weapons. Others suggest a framework convention, in which a broad policy toward abolition of nuclear weapons is stipulated first, after which specific contents are negotiated.

It is crucial for Japan to more actively push nuclear members such as the U.S. to get moving, and to engage more actively in debate that brings together both the ideal of a world without nuclear weapons and the realities of security circumstances. Japan must contribute toward harnessing the significant step the working group has just made in adopting its negotiation recommendation.

"It could be a major option for Japan"

August 23, 2016

EDITORIAL: Japan should take the lead in talks for nuclear ban treaty

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201608230028.html>

A United Nations working group on nuclear disarmament that has been meeting in Switzerland has adopted a report **recommending that negotiations on a nuclear ban treaty should be launched next year**. Twenty years have passed since the International Court of Justice in 1996 delivered its advisory opinion on the legality of nuclear weapons. The World Court said the threat or use of nuclear weapons would generally be contrary to the principles and rules of humanitarian law.

But the world has yet to have any international law that clearly bans nuclear arms.

An international move to negotiate a treaty banning nuclear arms would be a big step toward a world without nuclear weapons.

Japan's stance in the talks at the open-ended working group on nuclear disarmament, however, was really regrettable.

During the group's discussions, Japan repeatedly argued that given the current security environment, it is premature to start negotiations on a nuclear ban treaty. Tokyo abstained from voting on the report.

This is an unacceptably backward-looking stance for a country that knows the inhumane nature of nuclear weapons more than any other.

Japan should lead the efforts to map out a plan to start talks on a nuclear ban treaty while persuading the nuclear powers, which have boycotted the working group meetings, to join in.

As many as about 100 non-nuclear-weapon states have supported a nuclear ban treaty because of their frustration that there is no prospect for progress toward a nuclear-free world as long as talks on the issue are led by nuclear powers.

Nuclear arms reduction talks between the United States and Russia remain stalled. Meanwhile, the United States, Russia and China are spending huge amounts of money to upgrade their nuclear arsenals.

North Korea is developing nuclear arms and missiles.

Japan, Europe and other countries protected by the U.S. nuclear umbrella have been resisting a nuclear ban treaty, claiming that it will upset the balance of power in security based on nuclear deterrence and destabilize the entire world.

As for the goal of eliminating nuclear arms, they have only said it should be pursued through a gradual approach.

At the U.N. General Assembly, all the nuclear powers are expected to oppose the start of negotiations on a nuclear ban treaty.

Japan, which once suffered nuclear devastation, would greatly disappoint the international community if it supports the nuclear powers' move to block the talks.

The human race will never be free from risk of annihilation as long as it continues relying on nuclear deterrence.

Eventually imposing a legal ban on nuclear arms is indispensable for ensuring the true safety of the world.

Various proposals have been made about the treaty.

Some non-nuclear-weapon states and international nongovernmental organizations are supporting the radical proposal to establish a legal ban on nuclear weapons even without the endorsement of the nuclear powers.

Another proposal calls for a framework treaty under which countries would first agree to make it a legal obligation to eliminate nuclear weapons but allow concrete plans for achieving the goal to be gradually negotiated over the years.

Some experts say this proposal would be acceptable for countries dependent on the nuclear umbrella because it would allow for a certain period of continued reliance on nuclear deterrence.

It could be a major option for Japan.

What is needed now is an effective formula that would prevent a decisive division in the international community over a nuclear ban treaty.

Japan should provide solid leadership for the efforts to devise such a formula.

--The Asahi Shimbun, Aug. 23

Lesson from Nagasaki

August 21, 2016

<https://nf2045.blogspot.fr/>

Lesson from Nagasaki: Lighten up on Dark Tourism

"I see those people from Hiroshima and Nagasaki on the news every year and I wonder why they just can't let it go. Hasn't it been long enough already?"

These words were spoken to my wife recently by a Japanese co-worker when we returned from Nagasaki. This attitude might seem startling to peace activists in Japan and throughout the world who participate in memorial events every year on August 6th and 9th, but it is a sobering reminder that many people in Japan and throughout the world have let the memory fade, not even knowing what they don't know about the perils of nuclear weapons as they exist in today's world.

In a consumer society based on employment in a military economy, the institutions people pass through in their formative years do very little to teach history, political consciousness or the meaning of citizenship. Whatever lessons exist are delivered as tedious, obligatory lectures, followed by multiple choice tests. Lessons might also have come from elders in the form of scoldings about how tough things were during the war, how “you youngsters” have no idea and so on. The only thing worse than no history lessons is bad history lessons. Japanese people, in particular, may be inured to them because of an overdose of obligatory exposure to the rituals of remembrance.

Hiroshima and Nagasaki also invoke uncomfortable feelings of shame about losing the war, and shame about responsibility for it. The *hibakusha* and all the memorials in the two bombed cities evoke these conflicted feelings, so many Japanese would rather turn away, just as many Americans would rather turn away for inverse reasons.

While living in Japan I have met people who talked about visiting Hiroshima and Nagasaki, but they never mentioned the atom bomb. The only thing they wanted to talk about was the local foods they ate, or maybe a visit to Dejima, the old Dutch and Portuguese trading post in Nagasaki that used to be the most famous thing about the city. They talked about these visits like they would talk about a visit to any other place. Likewise, residents of the two cities have millions of good reasons to appreciate everything that happened before the war and after it, all the things that make their cities just like other cities. No one wants their city to be just about that one traumatic thing that happened one day long ago.

I had lived in Japan for many years before I visited either Hiroshima or Nagasaki, partly because I had other priorities, and partly because it just felt a little strange to visit a place just for *that*. I knew the history quite well, but I still questioned my motives. I finally went when I had someone to visit there, someone who just happened to be a historian who specialized in the cultural impacts of nuclear technology.

That was Robert Jacobs, who was interviewed on a local Hiroshima English language podcast shortly after President Obama’s visit to Hiroshima on May 27, 2016. During the interview he shed some light on why people are becoming less reluctant to visit traumatized places and engage in what has recently become known as “dark tourism:”

I met a religious studies scholar... who said... dark tourism has replaced religious pilgrimage... Going to places where history happened, especially traumatic history happened... gives your life more authenticity... This has been on the rise, and it’s partly a way to infuse our lives with meaning and connection to a world that is often at a distance from us... to infuse your own life with a deeper sense of the importance of peace because you’ve been to some place where peace is so important. It’s an emotional and a spiritual renewal to go to places like that, and the use of the word “dark” doesn’t mean that there is a dark meaning. It just means that it’s sites of historical trauma. People go there not to gawk at trauma or death but because these are the sites that resonate in our mythology of the world we live in. Religious sites don’t resonate so much the way that they used to, but people like to visit places that give their lives a sense of being connected to mythic things. In our lives the mythic things are often large historical tragedies, and in coming to a place like Hiroshima... “dark” just implies a place where a dark thing happened, but the motives of the people who come here is to increase their sense of connectedness and their sense of meaning... People will invoke having been to Hiroshima as a means of having authority. They will say, “I’ve been to Hiroshima... I can tell you about how bad nuclear weapons are...” These are empowering reasons that people visit... The phrase “dark tourism” certainly doesn’t imply that the motives of people are in any way dark. [1]

There could be a downside to claiming authority just because one has visited a place where something bad happened. It depends on what one learns about the entire context of the traumatic event. Visitors to Hiroshima could leave with widely divergent interpretations of what happened there in 1945. In the end there is much to be said for a pilgrimage to a local library in order to connect and infuse one's life with a deeper connection to history.

I can say that my visits to Hiroshima and Nagasaki achieved something that was missing in all that I knew about what happened there in August 1945. No matter how much I had learned from books and films and second-hand reports, it didn't become fully real in a certain sense until I could confirm it with my own senses, when I stood at ground zero, walked through the cities, visited the museums, and talked to eyewitnesses to the events. That's what is meant by "connection."

One of the great things about both cities is the streetcars. They still run down the routes that existed in 1945, and though they must have been rebuilt and refurbished many times since then, they haven't been modernized. They look, and feel, and sound just like the streetcars of old, and they are the means by which most visitors get from the central train stations to the atomic bomb memorial sites.

On August 8th I rode the streetcar in Nagasaki with my wife and son, from downtown to the Urakami district where the museum and hypocenter are located. As we got closer the streetcar became very crowded, as groups of students were in town to attend the annual memorial the next day. I was standing, and my wife and son were sitting. A white-haired woman in her late eighties got on. She was stooping over a cane, but she pushed her way through the crowded aisle with considerable force. I tapped my son and told him to give up his seat. She took it with quick smile of gratitude then immediately began to talk to my wife:

Everyone's going to the Peace Park today. That's good. Good to see so many young people here... I wasn't here that day. I was living down the line in Sasebo, but I had been called up to work in a factory here. For some reason I didn't have to go to work that day. But then later I was told to get to Nagasaki and report for work. I got down to Sasebo station, and when that train from Nagasaki came in, people just fell out of it and collapsed right there on the platform, never got up again. Piles of them, blackened and sick. They just spilled out of the train car. I've never seen people in such a horrid state. Every city was getting bombed. We expected it, but obviously something very strange had happened in Nagasaki. I didn't ride the train that day, but I went later... Sorry, I'm talking a lot, but I have to. Tomorrow the prime minister will come and make his speech again. So useless. We are really disappointed in him. I never used to talk to strangers like this, but now I talk to everyone because we have to. There are so few of us left.

Obviously, this is a translation and a paraphrase of a conversation recalled by my wife and related to me when we got off the streetcar. The reader may think I've embellished it, but this was the gist of it: the determination to tell the story, the need to condemn the present direction of the country, and thus the loss of all concern about what anyone might think about the unsolicited sharing of these stories with strangers on a streetcar. Looking back on it now, it seems to be the best way to explain to that smug, ignorant co-worker why people can't and don't have to "just get over it." The experience also taught me why people should dare to be "dark tourists" and take in everything they see and hear when they visit places of historical trauma, whether it's Auschwitz, Hiroshima or Wounded Knee. In this case, there was nothing like getting the story firsthand on a Nagasaki streetcar.

Our short visit to the city had other highlights. I was invited to join a study tour led by the historian of American University, Peter Kuznick (co-author of *The Untold History of the United States*), and there I met his students and others from Kyoto's Ritsumeikan University. A famous spokesperson for the *hibakusha* community was also there, 71-year-old Koko Tanimoto Kondo, who has devoted her life to speaking about the atomic bombings in both Japanese and English. Her father was Reverend Kiyoshi Tanimoto, [2] a Methodist minister who was portrayed in John Hersey's *Hiroshima*, the first report that exposed American audiences to the horror of what had happened on the ground on August 6th, 1945. [3][4] Reverend Tanimoto began a campaign to have nations dedicate August 6th as World Peace Day, and Koko, who was only eight months old at the end of the war, continued her father's mission as she grew older.

Another *hibakusha*, Kazutoshi Otsuka, spoke to the study group about the life he has devoted to telling the world about the necessity of abolishing nuclear weapons. He was ten years old at the time of the blast, and survived because he was at the edge of the zone of worst damage and was indoors at the time. He emerged from the debris that had fallen over him to find the city in ruins, utterly transformed from what it had been just a short time ago. The downtown area had been spared, but in Urakami almost all the buildings and thousands of people had just vanished. The last human voice he heard before the blast was his friend calling from outside, "The cicadas are singing. Let's go catch some." Did he die instantly in the blast? Did he run home and get caught in the fires? Did he die more slowly from radiation? Mr. Otsuka searched for his friend for a long time afterward, but it became obvious that he had vanished on the wind just like the last words he had spoken. For seventy-one years, while he has told his story to all who will listen, Mr. Otsuka has carried with him those simple words of invitation from his friend to enjoy a summer day.

The most famous icon of the atomic attacks is the Hiroshima Dome, one of the few structures left standing, but one which was almost demolished in the rush to rebuild the city and erase all signs of what had happened there. Those who wanted it preserved had a hard time convincing city hall that it would be worthwhile to preserve it. There is nothing similar in Nagasaki, except for some portions of the walls of Shiroyama Elementary School near the hypocenter. Like the dome in Hiroshima, its position directly under the blast allowed it to be not completely demolished by the lateral blast force. After the fires were out, the remnants of the school on a small hill stood as the only desolate reminder of all that had been in this section of the city called Urakami. However, it wasn't as photogenic as the Hiroshima Dome, and Nagasaki is more out of the way and receives fewer visitors, so it never became an iconic symbol of the atom bomb. In any case, the rebuilt school still functions as a school, so it wouldn't be able to deal with a constant stream of visitors.

We learned that every year on August 9th the school holds a remembrance ceremony for students, the community, and any visitors who wish to attend. The students all come back for a day from their summer vacations and dress up in formal attire in the 30-degree humidity. It is a mourning ceremony, so the adults wear black funeral suits and dresses.

My wife and I decided to get up early on the 9th and take our son to the ceremony. We had attended many Japanese school ceremonies with our children before, and this one was just like all the rest, but so different from all others as well.

A steep staircase leads up to the school, and Koko Tanimoto was already there at the top, beaming a welcoming smile to us. There was something from her father in that smile because she made it feel like we were being welcomed to church on a Sunday morning. We walked around the grounds and looked inside the restored section that holds artifacts and memorials for the disappeared. In a grove of trees just off the sports ground they still sometimes find bone chips a few inches down in the soil.

In his speech at the ceremony, the principal said everything one would expect at such an occasion, going over the events of that day and the weeks and months that followed, and the eventual rebuilding of the

school and the city. Several times he mentioned “passing the baton,” stressing to the children their heavy responsibility to carry on the memory that all other graduates of the school have carried into their adult lives.

Around the third time I heard that word *baton*, I began to feel uneasy about it. I started to wonder how many people had gone through that school wondering “Why us?” They didn’t drop the bomb. They didn’t ask for this burden, and they must wonder why the whole country and the whole world is not doing more to pass this baton to future generations. I didn’t visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki, or make friends in the peace movement, suffering from any delusions that it is easy to change the world. I think most of my fellow travelers and the *hibakusha* feel the same. We know what we are up against, and we know how badly the masters of war have betrayed us. The *hibakusha*’s commitment to peace makes for a paradoxical taboo against expressing anger and rage, but I suspect the survivors have reached old age bitterly aware that the world has done far too little to act on their call for the elimination of nuclear weapons. It must feel like cruel mockery as they reach their later years. There were many hopeful periods, such as the thaw between Khrushchev and Kennedy that was emerging just before JFK’s assassination, or the end of the Warsaw Pact in the late 1980s, but each time, to borrow a line from Leonard Cohen, the holy dove was caught again, bought and sold, and bought again. [5]

There must have been very many angry *hibakusha* over the decades, people who kept their rage contained within them, people who drank, people who became outcasts or extremists, but the openly angry people never got invited to official ceremonies. One can only speculate about the motives of the anonymous person who threatened to bomb Shiroyama Elementary School and other schools in Nagasaki in August 2016 (at least there was an advance warning), but it speaks to a very perverse disdain that exists in some people toward the victims rather than the perpetrators. [6]

Overt anger has been kept out of sight, but an acceptable outlet for covert anger is mainstream politics, where those in the ruling party dream of restoring the glory of the empire and their notion of “national honor” while accumulating plutonium from “the peaceful atom” and biding their time under American subservience. This is how contemporary Japanese society developed its neurotic ambivalence about its history and place in the world.

The various forms of anger have been reported by other writers who know the experiences of *hibakusha* well. Shortly after President Obama’s speech in Hiroshima, the journalist and filmmaker John Pilger had this to say:

... the cynicism of great power and great reckless power, in many respects is expressed at Hiroshima where... all the evidence shows that both Hiroshima and Nagasaki were sacrificed as America’s first expressions of violent power in the Cold War that was then underway. So for Obama to go and talk about the atomic bombs as if God dropped them... He used the passive voice... and really quite vomitus language like “we must have the courage to care.” So [according to Obama] no one dropped the atomic bombs. The United States certainly didn’t kill all those hundreds of thousands of people. It didn’t cause all that suffering. It’s something that we should all express sympathy to. It was like a kind of high mass and the great divinity was there, but not the United States. That [the US] is not to blame. That’s been Obama’s role as a PR man extraordinaire, and he came into power and people fell on their knees... This was a kind of second coming. There was a problem for the last few years with re-igniting Afghanistan and Iraq, and destroying Libya and so on, but the fawning has begun again as Obama’s time in office nears an end, and for people, for journalists to report—as I say the deeply cynical action of Obama and the United States in Hiroshima the other day—to report it without the context of all those survivors—and I’ve interviewed many of them—of how angry they were... they’re polite people and they’re very elderly... but they were angry. [7]

Two months later *The Mainichi* reported more precisely on this anger in describing how the secretary-general of the Japan Confederation of A-and H-Bomb Sufferers Organizations regretted his initial praise of Obama's speech when he had time to read an accurate translation the next day:

Terumi Tanaka, 84, was in attendance on May 27 this year when Obama was making what was the first visit of a sitting U.S. president to Hiroshima...

There was an interpreter for Obama's speech, but the speech was not handed out on paper... Sentences from the latter part of the speech, such as his reference to a future in which "Hiroshima and Nagasaki are known ... as the start of our own moral awakening," had stuck with him, and he praised the sentence as "excellent words." He noted, however, that he was "disappointed" that Obama had said, "We may not realize this goal (of a world without nuclear weapons) in my lifetime." The next morning... Tanaka opened a page containing the Japanese translation of the speech. It began, "Seventy-one years ago, on a bright cloudless morning, death fell from the sky and the world was changed." Tanaka was stunned. "Death did not 'fall from the sky.' This is making the death abstract. This is absolutely unacceptable," Tanaka thought. While on board the train he opened his laptop and began to write his "Essay of Regret." As he typed, erased and retyped, he says, "I began to get angry and stopped midway. They 'created' the death. As a sign of apology, I want them to eliminate nuclear weapons," he says. [8]

Another expression of this anger came from Setsuko Thurlow, a *hibakusha* who has lived for many years in Toronto. She was received at the White House in June, where she met the man who wrote the Hiroshima speech and hand-delivered a message for the president in which she listed the concrete measures that need to be taken to make the speech amount to more than aspirational fluff:

1. Stop the U.S. boycott of international nuclear disarmament meetings and join the 127 countries that have endorsed the Humanitarian Pledge to create a new legal instrument and new norms for a nuclear weapons ban treaty as a first step in their elimination and prohibition.
2. Stop spending money to modernize the US nuclear arsenal, a staggering \$1 trillion over the next three decades, and use this money to meet human needs and protect our environment.
3. Take nuclear weapons off high alert and review the aging command and control systems that have been the subject of recent research exposing a culture of neglect and the alarming regularity of accidents involving nuclear weapons. [9]

Much more could be said by the *hibakusha* community about issues not relating directly to disarmament, such as the worsening mistrust between the nuclear powers and the proliferation of conventional military power that leads so many nations to favor the "cheap and easy" asymmetrical nuclear deterrent. [10] The obstacles to peace are stacked high, and anger seems to be the only logical response. But I will hold onto the memory of Koko Tanimoto smiling at the top of those stairs at Shiroyama, greeting the late pilgrims like me who've finally decided to make this simple journey.

Notes

[1] J.J. Walsh, interviewer, "Professor Bo Jacobs on the Obama Visit," Get Hiroshima, May 30, 2016, 18:00~

- [2] "Hiroshima Survivor Meets Enola Gay Pilot," *This is Your Life*, 1955. The full interview with Reverend Tanimoto can be viewed on YouTube.
- [3] Robert Jacobs, "Reconstructing the Perpetrator's Soul by Reconstructing the Victim's Body: The Portrayal of the 'Hiroshima Maidens' by the Mainstream Media in the United States," *Intersections: Gender and Sexuality in Asia and the Pacific*, Issue 24, June 2010.
- [4] Tadatoshi Akiba, L. Wittner and T. Taue, "Why Hiroshima and Nagasaki Day Events Matter," *Asia Pacific Journal*, August 1, 2007.
- [5] Leonard Cohen, "Anthem," *The Future*, Columbia Records, 1992.
- [6] "'Hibakusha' talks scrapped after Nagasaki bomb threat," *Asahi Shinbun*, August 18, 2016.
- [7] Afshin Rattansi, interviewer, "ISIS in Fallujah & World War III with John Pilger (Episode 350 of Going Underground)," *Russia Today*, June 4, 2016. What John Pilger described as a "passive voice" construction could more accurately be called a usage of an intransitive verb which conceals the agent of the action. The speech writer had various syntactical choices available: *President Truman ordered the bombs to be dropped* or *The crew of the Enola Gay dropped the bomb*, *The bomb fell* or, at the level of greatest possible abstraction, *Death fell from the sky*.
- [8] Terumi Tanaka, "Hibakusha: A-bomb sufferers' group official regrets praising Obama speech," *The Mainichi*, August 2, 2016.
- [9] To Barack Obama from Setsuko Thurlow, International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, August 6, 2016.
- [10] Richard Rhodes, *Arsenals of Folly: The Making of the Nuclear Arms Race* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2007), 101. Many who favor nuclear deterrence believe that it has prevented a third world war that would have been fought with a massive arsenal of conventional weapons, with millions of casualties. In this argument, a nuclear arsenal is preferable, and it comes at a bargain price for nations large and small. Rhodes' book argues for abolition of nuclear arms, but he noted how their "low cost" (not considering what economists call "externalities") became a rationale for their development: "Nuclear warheads cost the United States about \$250,000 each: less than a fighter bomber, less than a missile, less than a patrol boat, less than a tank."

Japan's dilemma and inaction over nuclear weapons

August 24, 2016

Twisted stance on nuclear weapons

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2016/08/23/editorials/twisted-stance-nuclear-weapons/#.V71fUqJdeos>

Two recent developments concerning nuclear weapons highlighted Japan's twisted position — of advocating the abolition of nuclear arms as the sole nation in history to have experienced atomic attacks while depending on the “umbrella” of the nuclear arsenals of its ally, the United States, for its own security. Tokyo abstained from the vote at a United Nations-mandated panel last Friday that recommended to the General Assembly the launch of negotiations for an international treaty banning nuclear weapons. It has meanwhile been reported that Prime Minister Shinzo Abe conveyed his objection to a nuclear weapons “no first use” policy contemplated by U.S. President Barack Obama, although Abe denies it.

Though regrettable, both Japan's vote at the U.N. working group on nuclear disarmament in Geneva and Abe's reported opposition to Obama's nuclear policy review comes as little surprise. Tokyo has often deferred to the position of nuclear powers on issues of disarmament. Abe's concern — reportedly conveyed in a recent meeting with the head of the U.S. Pacific Command — that a U.S. declaration of a no first use policy could undermine the deterrence of its nuclear arsenal against countries such as North Korea sounds consistent with Japan's policy of relying on the U.S. nuclear umbrella for its defense. The question is whether Japan should continue to adhere to such a position. Possible talks at the U.N. on a legal framework for banning nuclear weapons — based on the majority recommendation by the working group — could put Tokyo's dilemma over nuclear disarmament in focus. Obama's nuclear policy review may hit a snag due to objections from inside his administration and key U.S. allies, but should Japan be among the parties to oppose a policy that could significantly reduce the security role of nuclear weapons? These developments should give the nation a chance to publicly discuss and rethink its twisted reliance on nuclear weapons.

The majority vote at the U.N. working group that adopted a report urging the General Assembly to begin talks on a treaty banning nuclear weapons reflected the split between the non-nuclear countries calling for the prohibition of such weapons on one hand, and nuclear powers — which have boycotted the working group discussions since February — and countries that rely on the nuclear umbrella of their allies, such as Japan and NATO members. The U.S. allies reportedly opposed such talks, insisting that nuclear disarmament should only proceed in tandem with security considerations and calling for an “incremental” approach to phasing out nuclear arsenals. The panel members voted 68 to 22 to adopt the report, with Japan among the 13 that abstained from the vote.

Japan's representative at the U.N. panel discussions reportedly deplored that participants did not spend enough time to reach a consensus, and expressed concern that the panel's decision “will further divide the international disarmament community and undermine the momentum of nuclear disarmament for the international community as a whole.” **But while Japan has vowed to bridge the divide between nuclear powers and non-nuclear countries, its abstention on the vote signifies the nation's dilemma and inaction over the issue.**

Unlike the Security Council, where the nuclear powers hold veto rights as permanent members, the General Assembly proceeds on a majority rule among its members. If a resolution calling for a treaty prohibiting the use, deployment, production and stockpiling of nuclear weapons is submitted on the basis of the working group report, it can be adopted, setting the stage for possible talks on such a treaty. How such a process will evolve without the involvement of the nuclear powers remains unclear.

Meanwhile, the Obama administration's review of the U.S. nuclear weapons policy has reportedly been in the works for several months. Little action followed the president's famed 2009 speech in Prague calling for "a world free of nuclear weapons." In his final year in office, Obama is said to have been weighing several options to advance his vision, including a declaration that the U.S. will not use nuclear weapons first in a conflict, as well as cuts to the budget for modernizing the U.S. nuclear arsenal and submitting to the U.N. Security Council a resolution banning nuclear weapons tests. The no first use policy, if adopted, will represent a landmark change in the U.S. nuclear posture that could lead to reducing the role of nuclear weapons — a condition that will contribute to creating the nuclear-weapons-free world that Obama advocated.

According to a recent Washington Post column that broke the story of Abe expressing his opposition, Japan joins other U.S. allies such as South Korea, France and Britain in communicating their concern about the possible declaration of such a policy by Obama. Along with the opposition of key members of his administration, the caution expressed by the allies are making the chances of the policy being endorsed slim, said the column. Abe has denied that the issue was discussed when he met recently with the U.S. commander in Tokyo. Speaking to reporters on Saturday, he said he believed the U.S. has made no decision on the nuclear policy review and that he would stay in close contact with Washington on the matter.

The security implications of a U.S. no first use policy may be subject to discussions. The U.S. allies are reported to have opposed because such a declaration by the U.S. could increase the risk of conventional warfare and that there would be no guarantee that other nuclear powers would follow the unilateral U.S. declaration and make it an international norm. Proponents of the no first use policy highlight the risks associated with the possibility of pre-emptive nuclear strikes, which it should remove. A group of former government officials in Asia-Pacific countries, including former Foreign Minister Yoriko Kawaguchi and her Australian counterpart Gareth Evans, issued a joint statement this month urging the Obama administration to adopt the no first use policy and calling on American allies in the region to support it. A no first use policy, they said, will facilitate changing the current "highly risky" policy on the operation of nuclear arsenals and, if adopted by all nuclear powers, will strengthen strategic stability and contribute to a norm that discourages the use of nuclear weapons.

In May, Obama became the first sitting U.S. president in history to visit the atomic-bombed city of Hiroshima, where he reiterated his resolve to seek a world free of nuclear weapons. Abe, who accompanied Obama in the visit, said he is determined to make efforts to ensure steady progress toward the goal of a nuclear-free world. The prime minister should show that Japan is indeed serious about pursuing that goal.

Nukes: What security in insecure regions?

September 12, 2016

The security of nukes in insecure regions

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2016/09/12/commentary/world-commentary/security-nukes-insecure-regions/#.V9aYjzVdeos>

by Bennett Ramberg

LOS ANGELES – The recent failed military coup in Turkey has produced instability, paranoia and a crackdown on the regime’s perceived opponents, including many journalists. Luckily, it did not end with rebel forces seizing some of the dozens of U.S. nuclear weapons stored at Turkey’s Incirlik Air Base, from which rebel aircraft departed. But what about next time?

The world’s nine nuclear powers claim that there is little to worry about. They argue that the combination of physical protection and, in most cases, electronic safeguards (permissive action links, or PALs) means that their arsenals would remain secure, even if countries where they are stored or deployed were engulfed by violence.

Robert Peurifoy, a former senior weapons engineer at Sandia National Laboratories, disagrees. He recently told the Los Angeles Times that such safeguards — earlier versions of which he helped to design — may only delay terrorists in using seized nuclear weapons. “Either you keep custody or you should expect a mushroom cloud.”

Peurifoy’s statements have rightly raised concerns about the security of nuclear weapons stockpiled in insecure regions. Consider Pakistan, which has the world’s fastest-growing nuclear arsenal and suffers relentless jihadi terrorism and separatist violence. Attacks have already been carried out on Pakistani military installations reportedly housing nuclear components. The country’s new mobile “battlefield nuclear weapons” — easier to purloin — augment current fears.

North Korea, with its volatile and mercurial regime, is another source of concern. Suspicious of the military, Kim Jong Un’s government has repeatedly purged senior officers, which has surely stoked opposition that someday could spark serious civil strife. Adding nuclear weapons to that mix would be highly dangerous. While other nuclear powers appear stable, countries like China and Russia, which rely increasingly on authoritarianism, could face their own risks should political cohesion fray.

Of course, there are plenty of examples of security enduring strife. The 1961 revolt of the generals in French Algeria, which placed a nuclear test device in the Sahara at risk, produced no dangerous incidents. In China, the government effectively protected nuclear weapons sites threatened by Revolutionary Guards during the Cultural Revolution. And neither the attempted coup against Mikhail Gorbachev nor the Soviet collapse resulted in a loss of control over the country’s nuclear arsenal.

But it is a leap to presume that these precedents mean that nuclear weapons will remain safe, especially in unstable countries like Pakistan and North Korea. Nuclear bombs or materials risk being controlled by rebels, terrorist groups or even failing and desperate governments. And, in those cases, the international community has few options for mitigating the threat.

External powers can, for example, launch a targeted attack, like the one that Israel carried out on suspected reactors under construction in Iraq and Syria. Those strikes would not have succeeded had Israel not been able to identify the targets accurately. Indeed, though the existence of Iraq’s Osirak plant was public knowledge, uncovering Syria’s Al Kibar plant was an intelligence coup.

Carrying out such a strike on North Korean or Pakistani nuclear sites in a time of crisis would require a similar breakthrough — one that may be even more difficult to achieve, given extensive concealment efforts. Stealthy movement of bombs or materials amid the unrest would further complicate targeting. Another option — invasion and occupation — avoids the challenge of identifying nuclear sites. The defeat of Nazi Germany permitted the Allies to find and destroy the country’s nascent nuclear program. The 2003 invasion of Iraq granted the U.S. unfettered access to all possible sites where weapons of mass destruction could be stored. But the costs were huge. Likewise, invasion and occupation of either North Korea or Pakistan would require massive armies risking a bitter conventional war and possible use of the weapons against the invaders.

A third option is nuclear containment, which relies on several measures. First, in order to prevent nuclear migration, all land, sea and air routes out of the country in question would have to be controlled, and homeland security near and far would have to be strengthened. While the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) is already in place to stop the smuggling of nuclear contraband worldwide, the International Atomic Energy Agency reports continued trafficking of small amounts of nuclear material. An increase in monitoring may reduce, but still not eliminate, the problem.

Containment also requires nuclear custodians be persuaded to risk their lives to defend nuclear sites against terrorists or rebels. And it demands that states neighboring the country in question put ballistic missile defenses on alert. While India, South Korea and Japan continue to modernize such systems, no missile defense is perfect.

In a time of crisis, when the facts on the ground change fast and fear clouds thinking, mitigating the nuclear threat is no easy feat. While concerned governments do have confidential contingency planning in place, such planning has a mixed record when it comes to responding to recent international upsets in the Middle East. And simply hoping that things will go according to plan, and nuclear command and control will stick, remains a gamble.

The time has come to discuss new ideas, with the United States — still the global leader in combating proliferation — taking the lead. A public discussion with input from the executive branch, Congress, think tanks, investigative journalists and scholars should lay a foundation for policy. We cannot allow ourselves to stand on the precipice of catastrophe without a well-considered and broadly supported plan in place. The lesson from Turkey is not that the bombs of Incirlik — not to mention other nuclear weapons in unstable regions — are safe. Rather, it is that our most deadly weapons could be compromised in an instant. It ought to be a wake-up call for all of us.

Bennett Ramberg, a policy analyst in the U.S. State Department's Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs under President George H.W. Bush, is the author of "Destruction of Nuclear Energy Facilities in War and Nuclear Power Plants as Weapons for the Enemy." © Project Syndicate, 2016

Ready for a nuclear test ban?

September 14, 2016

UN official expects adoption of nuclear test ban

http://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20160914_20/

A top UN disarmament official has expressed high expectations that the UN Security Council will soon adopt a draft resolution urging all member nations to refrain from carrying out nuclear explosive tests.

US President Barack Obama's administration compiled the draft resolution last month. Diplomatic sources say it has been submitted to the council.

UN High Representative for Disarmament Affairs Kim Won-soo spoke to NHK in New York on Tuesday.

Kim said the draft resolution is likely to be put to vote when the council holds a ministerial-level meeting on disarmament next Wednesday.

He said the chances are high that it will be adopted. He added that council members are aware of the urgent need to reinforce an international framework for stopping nuclear tests.

Twenty years have passed since the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, or CTBT, was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1996. But the pact has yet to take effect, partly because the US has failed to ratify it due to opposition by Congress.

Against this backdrop, Obama has urged the international community to refrain from nuclear tests through a Security Council resolution.

Attention is focused on whether it will be put to vote while the annual UN General Assembly takes place in New York over the next few weeks.

Is the implementation of CTBT getting any nearer?

September 16, 2016

5 nuclear powers agree to work for CTBT

http://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20160916_19/

Five nuclear powers have agreed to work for the early implementation of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, known as CTBT.

Representatives of the **United States, Russia, China, Britain and France** released a joint statement after 2 days of talks ended on Thursday in Washington.

In the statement, the 5 countries pledged to strive to ratify the CTBT. They also reaffirmed their commitment to the ongoing moratorium on nuclear explosive testing.

The CTBT was adopted by the UN General Assembly 20 years ago. But it has yet to take effect, as nuclear-armed countries such as the US and China have not ratified it.

It is unlikely that the US will ratify the treaty anytime soon due to strong opposition from the Republican Party.

In a bid to break the impasse, the administration of President Barack Obama has submitted to the UN Security Council a draft resolution calling on member states to refrain from carrying out nuclear tests.

After the disarmament talks, US Under Secretary of State Rose Gottemoeller said the draft resolution is aimed at highlighting the need to maintain momentum for bringing the CTBT into force.

The US-sponsored draft resolution will be put to a vote in the Security Council as early as next week.

International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons

Monday September 26

International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons

United Nations General Assembly
Special Plenary Session

"The consequences of any further use of nuclear weapons, whether intentional or by mistake, would be horrific. When it comes to our common objective of nuclear disarmament, we must not delay -- we must act now."

Secretary-General Ban-Ki Moon

Achieving global nuclear disarmament is one of the oldest goals of the United Nations. It was the subject of the General Assembly's first resolution in 1946. After general and complete disarmament first came onto the General Assembly's agenda in 1959, nuclear disarmament has remained the most important and urgent objective of the United Nations in this field. Since 1975, it has been a prominent theme of the review conferences of States parties to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. In 1978, the General Assembly's first Special Session on disarmament reaffirmed that effective measures for nuclear disarmament have the highest priority. And it has been supported by every United Nations Secretary-General.

Yet **today, some 15,000 nuclear weapons remain**. Countries possessing such weapons have well-funded, long-term plans to modernize their nuclear arsenals. More than half of the world's population still lives in countries that either have such weapons or are members of nuclear alliances. As of 2016, while there have been major reductions in deployed nuclear weapons since the height of the Cold War, not one nuclear warhead has been physically destroyed pursuant to a treaty, bilateral or multilateral, and no nuclear disarmament negotiations are underway. Meanwhile, the doctrine of nuclear deterrence persists as an element in the security policies of all possessor states and their nuclear allies. This is so—despite growing concerns worldwide over the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of the use of even a single nuclear weapon, let alone a regional or global nuclear war.

These facts provide the foundation for the General Assembly's designation of 26 September as the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons.

This Day provides an occasion for the world community to reaffirm its commitment to global nuclear disarmament as a high priority. It also provides an opportunity to educate the public—and their leaders—about the real benefits of eliminating such weapons, and the social and economic costs of perpetuating them.

Commemorating this Day at the United Nations is especially important, given its universal membership and its long experience in grappling with nuclear disarmament issues. It is the right place to address one of humanity's greatest challenges, achieving the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons.

For the 23rd year in a row

Japan to submit UN anti-nuclear draft resolution

http://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20160927_18/

Japan will submit a draft resolution to a UN disarmament committee calling for the total abolition of nuclear weapons **for the 23rd year in a row.**

Japan's deputy representative to the United Nations, Yoshifumi Okamura, announced the intention on Monday.

September 26th was "International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons." The day was established 2 years ago to mark the UN's first high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament in the previous year.

Delegates from more than 40 countries attended this year's meeting in the UN headquarters in New York on Monday.

Okamura said Japan will submit a draft resolution on elimination of nuclear weapons to a disarmament committee of the General Assembly later this year.

Japan wants the global community to see that Japan is resolved to work toward the goal as the only country that has suffered nuclear bombings.

He also said the UN Security Council is now working to adopt a resolution for additional sanctions against North Korea in response to the country's recent nuclear test.

North Korea's deputy ambassador to the UN, Ri Tong Il, defended his country's nuclear development. He said that without its nuclear deterrent, there would already have been another war like the ones in Iraq and Libya. He said nuclear weapons are the most reliable form of deterrence for the Korean Peninsula.

Other participants voiced concern and criticism over Ri's remark.

USA: What nuclear arsenal for the future?

September 27, 2016

Paying to modernize U.S. nuclear arsenal to be left to next president

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2016/09/27/business/paying-modernize-u-s-nuclear-arsenal-left-next-president/#.V-op9cldeos>

Reuters

MINOT AIR FORCE BASE, NORTH DAKOTA – In this flat, windy expanse just south of the Canadian border, U.S. Air Force pilots fly the same bombers their grandfathers flew, using mid-20th century cables and pulleys.

Each spring, the airmen and airwomen must clear melting snow from the steel and concrete doors of the silos that house 150 nuclear-tipped ballistic missiles scattered across thousands of square miles of the upper Great Plains.

The U.S. nuclear arsenal, patched, welded, and re-skinned countless times, was built between 25 and 62 years ago when the United States found itself locked in an arms race with a rival superpower, the Soviet Union. Now, its future is an issue in the campaign for the Nov. 8 presidential election.

Democratic candidate Hillary Clinton has said she would call for a nuclear posture review, last completed in 2010, as one of her first acts upon taking office. Republican candidate Donald Trump has said he would be open to reversing decades of U.S. policy and allowing allies such as Japan and South Korea to acquire their own nuclear weapons to deter a strike from North Korea, which carried out its fifth and largest nuclear test this month.

On Monday, in his first visit to Minot Air Force Base in North Dakota as U.S. Secretary of Defense, Ash Carter said America's nuclear deterrence was the "bedrock" of its security, and the Pentagon's No. 1 priority.

"If we don't replace these systems, quite simply they will age even more, and become unsafe, unreliable, and ineffective," Carter said, speaking at a lectern in front of a B-52 bomber loaded with cruise missiles.

"The fact is, most of our nuclear weapon delivery systems have already been extended decades beyond their original expected service lives. So it's not a choice between replacing these platforms or keeping them — it's really a choice between replacing them or losing them," Carter said.

Russia, he said, had built new nuclear weapons systems, raising questions as to whether its leaders were cautious enough when it came to atomic weapons. And North Korea presents a sustained threat, Carter said.

Carter's speech coincides with a growing realization among defense officials and experts that budget constraints almost certainly will force the next president to decide whether and how quickly to proceed with the Obama administration's plans to maintain and modernize the U.S. nuclear arsenal.

The crunch comes in the next decade as American ballistic missile submarines, bombers and land-based missiles — the three legs of the nuclear triad — reach the end of their useful lives.

The Congressional Budget Office estimates the total cost of nuclear forces through 2024 at \$348 billion, but that does not include some of the costliest upgrades, scheduled for the latter half of the next decade. Independent estimates have put the cost of maintaining and modernizing the arsenal at about \$1 trillion over 30 years.

"There's a bipartisan commitment to doing that upgrade, so we have to assume those funds will come through," Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz told Reuters on Sept. 20. "But it will be a significant budget increase, especially in the next decade."

The Energy Department shares responsibility with the Pentagon for the nuclear arsenal, and some of its research and production facilities are 73 years old.

The next administration could abandon or delay some aspects of modernization to cut costs. Or it could raise taxes, increase the budget deficit, or cut domestic programs, all unpopular steps with American voters.

The most vulnerable elements of the modernization plans are a long-range standoff weapon, or LRSO — a nuclear-capable cruise missile launched from an aircraft — and new land-based intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs).

Ten U.S. senators, including Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts and Bernie Sanders of Vermont, called on President Barack Obama in July to cancel the LRSO, saying it “would provide an unnecessary capability that could increase the risk of nuclear war.”

Some Pentagon officials and defense experts have said the cruise missile would be a hedge against improved air defenses that are difficult for even a stealthy bomber to penetrate.

A Clinton or Trump administration also could cut the number of land-based ballistic missiles below the 400 currently planned or delay a new missile by extending the life of the current Minuteman IIIs, which each carry a warhead with an explosive yield of at least 300 kilotons, 20 times more powerful than the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima, which ultimately killed an estimated 140,000 people.

The United States is one of five nuclear weapons states allowed to keep a nuclear arsenal under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. The others are Russia, Britain, France and China.

The U.S. Air Force has estimated the cost of a new ground-based system — including missiles, command-and-control systems and launch control centers — to be more than \$60 billion.

Some former U.S. officials, including former Defense Secretary William Perry, have argued that land-based missiles are not essential and should be phased out; proponents say they are more important in the face of potential nuclear threats by Russia and North Korea.

Much of the planned modernization is nearly locked in because of the need for new weapons and because some of it is so far along, said Evan Montgomery, a senior fellow at the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, a Washington-based research group.

The B-21 long-range strike bomber and the replacement for the Navy’s 14 Ohio-class ballistic missile submarines are “the two most expensive items, and they’re arguably the two safest in a lot of ways,” Montgomery said. The bomber can deliver both conventional and nuclear weapons, and the submarine is considered a priority because it would survive any first strike by an adversary.

The Navy plans to replace its Ohio-class submarines, first commissioned in 1981 and armed with up to 24 Trident missiles with multiple independently targeted warheads, with 12 boats costing about \$100 billion.

In his speech on Monday, Carter said that most people do not realize that spending on the nuclear program is a small percentage of total defense spending. **At its peak, nuclear spending would make up about 5 percent of the Pentagon’s budget, which is now around \$600 billion annually,** defense experts said.

Still, the funding gap means that despite the Pentagon’s massive budget, the next president will face an unavoidable dilemma.

“There’s no doubt in my mind that we’re tens of billions of dollars short in that time frame from what it takes to execute a global strategy,” said James Miller, a former undersecretary of defense for policy in the Obama administration. “It’s not a rounding error anymore.”

Six non-nuclear states press for ban

September 29, 2016

Non-nuclear states press for U.N. treaty to ban nuclear weapons

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201609290013.html>

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

GENEVA--Despite arm-twisting and vocal opposition from nuclear powers like the United States, six non-nuclear countries urged the U.N. General Assembly Wednesday to work toward a "legally-binding" accord to ban nuclear weapons in hopes of ridding them from the planet altogether one day.

The countries--Austria, Brazil, Ireland, Mexico, Nigeria and South Africa--sent world diplomats a draft text that calls for a U.N. conference next year to draw up a treaty banning nuclear weapons, diplomats said.

The Associated Press obtained a copy of the text, which is to be considered at the United Nations in New York starting next month.

The 3-page draft, which heads to a U.N. committee in New York, hews closely to a resolution passed at a working-group meeting of non-nuclear states in Geneva last month. The text urges states "to negotiate a legally-binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons" that would aim one day for their "total elimination."

It also says a U.N. conference should convene next year for 20 working days in two sessions, bringing international organizations and civil society into the process of drawing up a treaty.

However, it stops short of setting a calendar or deadline for an eventual passage of the treaty.

The text also urges countries to apply working group recommendations to increase transparency about the risks of nuclear weapons, enact measures to reduce the risk of accidental or unauthorized detonations, and raise awareness about the consequences of a detonation.

Austria's permanent representative in Geneva, Thomas Hajnoczi, called the text a "big step." While acknowledging that security agreement at the U.N. for a nuclear weapons ban would likely be a long process, Hajnoczi expects a vote on the text by a U.N. committee on disarmament around Nov. 1 that could send it to the assembly in December.

"It's hard to see how this treaty wouldn't strengthen the non-proliferation regime," he said, alluding to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty that has been a global benchmark of limiting nuclear weapons for years. But only a day earlier, Anita E. Friedt, a top State Department official on arms control, told a Center for Strategic International Studies panel in Washington that the United States believes "pursuit of such a ban is unrealistic and simply impractical" and "could actually end up harming" broader, tangible efforts toward disarmament.

Another Geneva diplomat familiar with the text, speaking on condition of anonymity amid concern about reprisals, said the refusal of nuclear-armed countries to take part in the working group actually encouraged some states to support work toward a ban, because it suggested to them that the powers weren't taking disarmament seriously enough.

The drafters and other countries favorable to a ban had come under "incredible" pressure not to move forward, the diplomat said. The "arm-twisting" involved constant calls, diplomatic "demarche" insistence, and even a "division of labor" among key nuclear powers to focus on specific regional governments to lobby against the initiative, the diplomat said.

Nuclear-armed France, for example, was to focus on African countries, and Britain was to concentrate on potential ban supporters in Europe along with the United States, which was to lobby countries in NATO and others covered by the U.S. nuclear "umbrella," the diplomat said.

U.S. President Barack Obama has expressed a long-term commitment to pursuing a world without nuclear weapons. Defense Secretary Ash Carter in London recently acknowledged the inherent risk of nuclear arms. Carter said, "We're going to have nuclear weapons as far into the future as I can see," and that they need to be safe, reliable and secure.

Austria's Hajnoczi acknowledged it was tough to know what nuclear-armed states including China, Russia, France, Britain and the United States might do to thwart the march toward a treaty.

"We will see what those countries who do not like the project will do....That is something we cannot predict," he said.

No more cooperation

October 6, 2016

Russia suspends nuclear agreement, ends uranium research pact with United States

http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2016/10/06/world/russia-suspends-nuclear-agreement-ends-uranium-research-pact-united-states/#.V_YixMldeot

Reuters

MOSCOW – Russia has further curtailed its cooperation with the United States on nuclear energy by suspending a research agreement and terminating another on uranium conversion, two days after the Kremlin shelved a plutonium pact with Washington.

The Russian government said Wednesday that as a countermeasure to the U.S. sanctions imposed on it over events in Ukraine, it was putting aside a nuclear and energy-related research pact with the United States.

It also announced the termination, for the same reasons, of an agreement between its nuclear corporation, Rosatom, and the U.S. Department of Energy on feasibility studies into conversion of Russian research reactors to low-enriched uranium.

On Monday, President Vladimir Putin suspended a treaty with Washington on cleaning up weapons-grade plutonium, a signal that he is willing to use nuclear disarmament as a new bargaining chip in disputes with the United States over Ukraine and Syria.

"The regular renewal of sanctions against Russia, which include the suspension of Russian-American cooperation in the field of nuclear energy demands the adoption of countermeasures against the U.S. side," the Russian government said on its website.

In Washington, a State Department spokesman said the United States had not received an official notification from Russia although he had seen media reports of the suspension of the research agreement. "If they're accurate, we would regret the Russian decision to unilaterally suspend cooperation on what we believe is a very important issue that's in the interest of both of our countries," spokesman Mark Toner said at a daily news briefing.

The Russian Foreign Ministry said the decisions were taken in response to "unfriendly acts" by Washington. They came two days after Washington said it was suspending talks with Russia on trying to end the violence in Syria.

The agreement on co-operation in nuclear and energy-related scientific research, signed in 2013, provided the legal framework necessary to expand work between U.S. and Russian nuclear research laboratories and institutes in nuclear technology and nonproliferation, among others.

The uranium agreement, signed in 2010, provided for feasibility studies into the conversion of six Russian research reactors from dangerous highly enriched uranium to more secure low-enriched uranium.

“We can no longer trust Washington in such a sensitive area as the modernization and security of Russian nuclear facilities,” the Russian Foreign Ministry said.

It said that should Russia decide on the feasibility of the conversion of any research reactors to low-enriched uranium, it will carry out the work itself. But it warned the conversion may not be “an end in itself.”

“In some cases, including in the production of medical isotopes, highly enriched uranium is the most effective and renouncing it would be technically and economically inexpedient,” the ministry said.

The West imposed economic sanctions on Russia over its annexation of Ukraine’s Crimea Peninsula in 2014, followed by a pro-Russian insurrection in the east of the country. The breakdown of a cease-fire in Syria, where Russia backs government forces and the West supports rebel groups, has added to tensions. October 4, 2016

Putin suspends 2010 agreement to clean up weapons-grade plutonium with U.S.

http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2016/10/04/world/putin-scraps-plutonium-disposal-deal-unfriendly-u-s/#.V_PnBMLdeou

Reuters, AFP-JJJI

MOSCOW – President Vladimir Putin on Monday suspended a treaty with Washington on cleaning up weapons-grade plutonium, signaling he is willing to use nuclear disarmament as a new bargaining chip in disputes with the United States over Ukraine and Syria.

Starting in the last years of the Cold War, Russia and the United States signed a series of accords to reduce the size of their nuclear arsenals, agreements that have so far survived intact despite a souring of U.S.-Russian relations under Putin.

But on Monday, Putin issued a decree suspending an agreement, concluded in 2000, which bound the two sides to dispose of surplus plutonium originally intended for use in nuclear weapons.

The Kremlin said it was taking that action in response to unfriendly acts by Washington. It made the announcement shortly before Washington said it was suspending talks with Russia on trying to end the violence in Syria.

The plutonium accord is not the cornerstone of post-Cold War U.S.-Russia disarmament, and the practical implications from the suspension will be limited. But the suspension, and the linkage to disagreements on other issues, carries powerful symbolism.

“Putin’s decree could signal that other nuclear disarmament cooperation deals between the United States and Russia are at risk of being undermined,” Stratfor, a U.S.-based consultancy, said in a commentary.

“The decision is likely an attempt to convey to Washington the price of cutting off dialogue on Syria and other issues.”

Independent military expert Alexander Golts said that it is not the first agreement to be suspended in the nonproliferation sphere.

“It’s a symbolic gesture that demonstrates that the sides no longer cooperate in this sphere,” Golts added. U.S. State Department spokesman John Kirby said in a statement Monday that bilateral contacts with Moscow over Syria are being suspended. Kirby said Russia had failed to live up to its commitments under a cease-fire agreement.

Western diplomats say an end to the Syria talks leaves Moscow free to pursue its military operation in support of Syrian President Bashar Assad, but without a way to disentangle itself from a conflict which shows no sign of ending.

Russia and the United States are also at loggerheads over Ukraine. Washington, along with Europe, imposed sanctions on Russia after it annexed Ukraine's Crimea region in 2014 and backed pro-Moscow rebels in eastern Ukraine.

Putin submitted a draft law to parliament setting out under what conditions work under the plutonium accord could be resumed. Those conditions were a laundry list of Russian grievances toward the United States.

They included Washington lifting the sanctions imposed on Russia over Ukraine, paying compensation to Moscow for the sanctions, and reducing the U.S. military presence in NATO member state in Eastern Europe to the levels they were 16 years ago.

Any of those steps will involve a complete U-turn in long-standing U.S. policy.

"The Obama administration has done everything in its power to destroy the atmosphere of trust which could have encouraged cooperation," the Russian Foreign Ministry said in a statement on the treaty's suspension.

"The step Russia has been forced to take is not intended to worsen relations with the United States. We want Washington to understand that you cannot, with one hand, introduce sanctions against us where it can be done fairly painlessly for the Americans, and with the other hand continue selective cooperation in areas where it suits them."

The 2010 agreement, signed by Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and former U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, called on each side to dispose of 34 tons of plutonium by burning it in nuclear reactors. Clinton said at the time that there was enough of the material to make almost 17,000 nuclear weapons. Both sides back then viewed the deal as a sign of increased cooperation between the two former Cold War adversaries.

Russian officials alleged on Monday that Washington had failed to honor its side of the agreement. The Kremlin decree stated that, despite the suspension, Russia's surplus weapons-grade plutonium would not be put to military use.

The U.S.-Russian Plutonium Management and Disposition Agreement obliged Moscow and Washington to dispose of no less than 34 tons of weapon-grade plutonium by irradiating it or transforming it into so-called MOX (mixed oxide) fuel.

The building of a MOX fuel reprocessing plant was opposed in the United States in the wake of the 2011 Fukushima nuclear disaster over safety fears and the high cost of the project, which is already billions of dollars over budget.

U.S. energy officials have pushed for using another method of disposal, calling for plutonium to be mixed with other substances and stored underground, but Moscow argues that any method to dilute plutonium is reversible.

See also:

October 3, 2016

Russia suspends weapons-grade plutonium deal with US

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-37539616>

Russia has suspended an agreement with the US on the disposal of surplus weapons-grade plutonium, the latest sign of worsening bilateral relations.

In a decree, President Vladimir Putin accused the US of creating "a threat to strategic stability, as a result of unfriendly actions" towards Russia.

Moscow also set pre-conditions for the US for the deal to be resumed.

Under the 2000 deal, each side is supposed to get rid of 34 tonnes of plutonium by burning it in reactors.

It is part of cuts to nuclear forces.

The US state department said the combined 68 tonnes of plutonium was "enough material for approximately 17,000 nuclear weapons". Both sides had reconfirmed the deal in 2010.

In a separate development, the US said it was suspending talks with Russia over the Syrian crisis.

Washington said Moscow had not lived up to the terms of last month's ceasefire agreement, which has since collapsed.

Russia said it regretted the decision, accusing the US of trying to shift the blame on to Russia over the failed deal.

In Monday's decree (in Russian), President Putin said Russia had to take "urgent measures to defend the security of the Russian Federation".

In April, Mr Putin said the US was failing to fulfil its obligations to destroy plutonium. Instead, he argued, the US reprocessing method allowed plutonium to be extracted and used again in nuclear weapons.

Both sides had agreed to build special facilities for disposing of the surplus plutonium.

"We fulfilled our duties, we built that enterprise. But our American partners did not," Mr Putin said.

The US rejected that claim, insisting that its disposal method did not violate the agreement.

Also on Monday, President Putin submitted a bill (in Russian) to parliament setting a series of pre-conditions for the US for the agreement to be resumed, including:

- reduction of US military infrastructure and troops in countries that joined Nato after 1 September 2000
- lifting of all US sanctions against Russia and compensation for the damage they have caused

The US - as well as the European Union - imposed a series of sanctions against Russia following the annexation by Moscow of Ukraine's southern Crimea peninsula in 2014, and Russia's support for separatists in eastern Ukraine.

Tensions between Washington and Moscow rose further last month over Russia's bombing campaign in Syria, which some have described as a "war crime".

Russian planes are helping Syrian government forces to hit rebel groups, some of which are supported by the US and its Gulf Arab allies.

Russia is currently modernising its nuclear arsenal.

ICJ rejects Marshall Islands' case

October 6, 2016

World court rejects epic Marshalls nuclear case

http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2016/10/06/asia-pacific/world-court-rejects-epic-marshalls-nuclear-case/#.V_YjYsIdeot

AFP-JIJI

THE HAGUE – The U.N.'s highest court on Wednesday narrowly threw out landmark cases brought by the tiny Marshall Islands against India, Pakistan and Britain for **allegedly failing to halt the nuclear arms race.**

In majority and sharply divided decisions, a 16-judge bench at the International Court of Justice in The Hague ruled there was no evidence that Majuro had a prior dispute with any of the three nuclear giants or had sought negotiations on the issue.

“The court upholds the objection to jurisdiction” raised by each of the countries, presiding Judge Ronny Abraham said in separate rulings, and therefore the tribunal “cannot proceed to the merits of the case.” The tiny Pacific island nation, with a population of 55,000, was ground zero for a string of devastating nuclear tests on its pristine atolls between 1946 and 1958, carried out by the United States as the Cold War arms race gathered pace.

After the hearings, the Marshalls said it will now “study the ruling,” which is final and without appeal.

“Obviously it’s very disappointing,” Marshall Islands lawyer Phon van den Biesen told reporters.

“It’s a dispute that is clear to all of the world except for the judges here,” he said outside the courtroom in the ICJ’s historic headquarters in the Peace Palace in The Hague.

Initially in 2014, Majuro had accused nine countries of failing to comply with the 1968 nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, which seeks to inhibit the spread of atomic bombs.

But the ICJ already refused to take up cases against the other countries — China, France, Israel, North Korea, Russia and the United States — as they have not recognized the court’s jurisdiction.

Israel has also never formally admitted to having nuclear weapons.

The Marshall Islands argued that by not stopping the nuclear arms race, Britain, India and Pakistan had breached obligations under the treaty — even if New Delhi and Islamabad have not signed it.

At a poignant March hearing, Majuro’s lawyers painted a vivid picture of the horrors caused by 67 nuclear tests notably the atolls of Bikini and Enewetak.

“Several islands in my country were vaporized and others are estimated to remain uninhabitable for thousands of years,” Tony deBrum, a former Marshall Islands foreign minister, told the court.

“The entire sky turned blood-red,” said deBrum, who was 9 when he witnessed the blasts.

Abraham noted the archipelago, “by virtue of the suffering which its people endured as a result of it being used as a site for extensive nuclear testing, has special reasons for concern about nuclear disarmament.”

“But that fact does not remove the need to establish that the conditions for the court’s jurisdiction are met,” Abraham said.

The so-called “Operation Castle” tests in March and April 1954 were particularly devastating and resulted in massive contamination due to nuclear fall-out.

The NPT commits all nuclear weapon states “to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date.”

Critics had argued, however, that the ICJ action was a distraction as the islanders’ real fight was with Washington.

They contended the case was unrelated to the victims’ claims for increased compensation, better health care and cleanups to render the sites habitable again.

The islands hoped, however, to reignite the debate over the disarmament talks, which have stalled over the past two decades.

“The Marshall Islands decided to bring these cases because they come from a notion that in the end nuclear weapons are the most horrific weapons on Earth,” said Van den Biesen.

Experts said there had always been a possibility the case could “backfire.”

“That it happened this early is certainly very disappointing for them and the whole nuclear disarmament movement,” said Joris Larik, senior researcher at The Hague Institute for Global Justice.

“But it also shows that small island nations are looking for smart ways to play a role on the global stage. Sometimes they succeed, and in a case like this, perhaps not so much.”

Danger of India-Pakistan tensions

October 7, 2016

Pathways to a catastrophic India-Pakistan nuclear war

http://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2016/10/07/commentary/world-commentary/pathways-catastrophic-india-pakistan-nuclear-war/#.V_d1rMldeou

by Ramesh Thakur

CANBERRA – Of the multiple international crises bubbling away in the world’s various trouble spots, potentially the most dangerous is the spike in tensions between India and Pakistan. The reason is simple: It could cross the threshold to become a nuclear war. Conventional wars can kill large numbers of soldiers and civilians of the conflict parties but leave others largely untouched. By contrast, if India and Pakistan fought a nuclear war using only a fraction of their estimated 230 nuclear warheads, it could leave up to 2 billion people dead around the world through direct casualties, blast, heat, radiation and nuclear winter effects on global crop production and food distribution networks.

Because the costs of a nuclear war would be catastrophic, it is inconceivable that either government would pursue a deliberate strategy of courting a direct military confrontation. Yet arms control analysts have long identified the subcontinent as among the likeliest of global nuclear flashpoints.

How then might they end up fighting a nuclear war? There are several pathways through miscalculations, rogue launches, misinformation and jihadi provocations. The backdrop to these unintended and unwanted pathways to a nuclear war is the state of extreme tension in their relations where minor incidents can quickly spin out of the ability of either government to control.

On Sept. 29, Lt. Gen. Ranbir Singh announced that special forces had attacked and destroyed seven “launchpads” in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, killing over 30 militants with no loss of Indian life. The action, although officially justified in the language of preemption of an imminent attack, was in reality reprisal for an attack by Pakistan-based infiltrators on an Indian Army base in Uri in Indian-administered Kashmir that killed 18 soldiers.

Uri might well mark an inflection point in the evolution of India’s Pakistan policy. In a vicious case of blowback, Pakistan’s own terror toll from home-based jihadis has climbed steadily higher than India’s. This has not been sufficient to convince the military and intelligence agencies that control Pakistan’s security policy and policy toward New Delhi, to liquidate their carefully nurtured jihadi “assets” against India.

India’s cross-border military raids by special operations forces were preceded by political and diplomatic offensives and threats of economic retaliation. Prime Minister Narendra Modi suggested Pakistan’s people should ask their government why, having become independent together, today India exports software while Pakistan exports terror? In almost all incidents of international terrorism, he said, the perpetrators either came from Pakistan or settled there afterward, as with Osama bin Laden.

In exceptionally sharp language at the United Nations, Indian officials painted Pakistan as the host of the Ivy League of terrorism. India succeeded also in getting the planned South Asian regional summit meeting in Islamabad canceled. And it has put on the table the threats to abrogate Pakistan’s most-favored-nation trade status and terminate the Indus Waters Treaty for sharing the river’s bounty with water-stressed Pakistan.

Either side could gravely miscalculate the other's tolerance threshold for eschewing caution in favor of direct military action and the consequences of a strategic delusion are catastrophic when nuclear weapons are involved. India's retaliatory strikes along the Line of Control in Kashmir shows that its tolerance threshold for serial attacks by Pakistan-backed infiltrators has been breached. But can India in turn be confident of an accurate assessment of what the Pakistan military's red line is for responding to India's "surgical strikes" by escalating either horizontally, opening new fronts for skirmishes; or vertically, by increasing the intensity of provocations?

Analysts have been anticipating water wars for decades. Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif warns that restrictions on Pakistan's access to the Indus River water would constitute an act of war. Given how vital that water is to Pakistan, India would be foolish to dismiss the warning as yet another idle threat. India's policy of "strategic restraint" was misread by Pakistan's generals as a successful Pakistani policy of nuclear neutering of the arch enemy. While nuclear rivalry induces extra caution, it does not confer immunity against targeted military retaliation. Yet Pakistan's military establishment seems to have convinced itself to the contrary. Pakistan had exploited the nuclear overhang to nurture jihadi and terrorist proxies to inflict serial attacks across the border. The risk of a nuclear escalation was also used to try to blackmail other countries into putting pressure on India to solve the Kashmir dispute or risk a nuclear war. India has effectively called Pakistan's nuclear bluff.

To offset India's huge conventional advantages stemming from massive size disparities in population, GDP and defense forces, Pakistan has been building and talking up the deterrent value of its tactical nuclear weapons to be deployed on the forward edge of the battlefield. To be operational, this necessarily involves delegation of the power to launch nuclear weapons to battlefield commanders. Rogue military commanders could provoke a crisis through unauthorized acts that senior officers are unable to contain in a febrile nationalist atmosphere.

Will Pakistan's soon to retire army chief feel humiliated enough to authorize still riskier actions inside India? Alternatively, what if the new army chief proves more risk-prone?

Alternatively, mass suicide-courting jihadis could provoke a crisis in the tinderbox state of bilateral relations with a plentiful supply of willing Pakistani recruits and soft Indian targets, with the goal of generating an irreversible spiral of escalation.

As well as rogue and humiliated military commanders and martyrdom-seeking terrorists, irresponsible politicians should never be discounted as triggers for war. Politicians in both countries may see opportunities for major domestic gains by mocking a policy of responsible restraint as cowardice: Nationalistic chest thumping never lacks for a political constituency in any country.

Finally, discontent in the Kashmir valley could intensify and lead to serial crises. No Indian government has thus far shown the requisite political will to solve Kashmir as a crisis in Indian federalism, or the diplomatic deftness to negotiate a solution with Pakistan. Nor has Modi been able to prevent hard-line Hindus from acting as roaming vigilante squads enforcing Hindu dietary restrictions, intimidating and even killing those they suspect of defiling Hindu beliefs. Can he contain acts of Hindu triumphalism against Indian Muslims?

Any spread of disaffection to India's 150 million Muslims in general could make the country completely ungovernable and open up a vast scope for Pakistan to deepen discontent inside India.

The final sobering thought is that the nuclear relationship between India and Pakistan is conceptually, politically and strategically deeply intertwined with China as a nuclear power.

Ramesh Thakur, a professor at the Crawford School of Public Policy, Australian National University, is director of the Center for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament and co-convenor of the Asia-Pacific Leadership Network for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament.

Stop new nuclear bomb for Europe!

<http://buechel-atombombenfrei.jimdo.com/international/worldwide-and-us-solidarity/>

Stop new nuclear bomb -- B61-12 -- for Europe!

International solidarity declaration needed -- strengthen the global network!

German campaign to send the existing US nukes back home, and to organize against the new B61-12 US nuclear bomb, which is planned to be built in the US by 2020 for five European countries (Italy, Belgium, Holland, Turkey and Germany):

Despite the end of the Cold War, about 20 US nuclear bombs are still deployed at a German air force base named Büchel. German pilots will have to take off with these bombs in Tornado fighter planes when the order comes from the US president, through NATO, to drop them on their targets. This horrifying vision is part of the „nuclear sharing agreement“ in NATO, with its nuclear deterrence policy, and includes the first strike option.

These weapons of mass destruction – illegal under both German and international law -- are planned to be replaced by expensive (a \$10 billion program), new, precision-guided nuclear weapons in the near future, through the National Nuclear Security Administration's nuclear weapons complex. All three nuclear Laboratories (Y12 Plant, Kansas City Plant und Sandia Lab) are part of B61-12 construction, mainly through Boeing (tailfin kit: \$1.8 billion), Lockheed Martin, Honeywell and Bechtel. With about 400 B61-12 bombs to be refurbished for Europe, that's about \$25 million per bomb, calculated by expert Hans Kristensen.

20 weeks of action at the Büchel base

Twenty weeks for twenty bombs – starting again on March 26*, 2017 until August 9th, groups and individuals will hold vigils and other kinds of nonviolent direct action (blockades, trespassing, etc.) at the Büchel base to pressure the government, leading up to the next election in Germany in September, 2017.

****26 March 2010 cross-party motion calling on the government to work towards a withdrawal of nuclear weapons!***

Declaration of Commitment

Our Germanwide campaign „Büchel is everywhere – nuclear free now!“ is organized by 50 organisations/groups. The active presence at Büchel is planned to be the beginning of a long-term phase of action to prevent the nuclear upgrade. The core element of the campaign is our Declaration of Commitment signature campaign where people declare in public (on our website):

„I will come to Büchel once a year and take part in an action until nuclear weapons are withdrawn, and I will actively commit to seeking a nuclear weapons-free world in the place where I am living.“

We also plan to have an international week of action in 2017. If you are interested in joining, please contact: mariongaaa@gmx.de, or via our website: www.buechel-atombombenfrei.de, and let us know

about any support you might need. All kinds of housing, including camping opportunities, exists in this beautiful volcanic region. There will be an office and a contact person nearby.

In 2016 we had 20 weeks of actions with 45 religious, peace, women, anti-nuclear, and other groups participating.

Besides the Declaration of Commitment, we also have a Declaration of Solidarity especially for people who cannot come, but who want to show their full support (please sign on the other side of the page).

In Germany, the peace movement always risks the possibility of being considered „anti-American.“ With plenty of signatures from the global peace & justice movement, we can show that we are united in our vision for a nuclear-free world – also with indigenous peoples and other people of color, who are disproportionately impacted by the nuclear production chain. We don't want new nuclear weapons, and we believe the money should go to the people's real needs!

US pushes NATO members to vote "no"

October 26, 2016

US urges NATO to oppose UN nuclear ban resolution

http://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20161026_18/

NHK has learned that the US government has urged NATO member nations to oppose a UN draft resolution proposing negotiations on a legally-binding nuclear weapons ban treaty.

The draft resolution is the main highlight of the UN General Assembly's First Committee meeting which began in New York earlier this month.

The draft submitted by about 50 non-nuclear countries including Austria calls for starting talks in 2017 to create a treaty to ban nuclear arms.

The United States and Britain, which possess such weapons, are opposed to the General Assembly resolution. **Japan is under the US nuclear umbrella and has yet to decide its position.**

NHK has obtained a copy of a US document distributed to NATO member countries titled "Defense Impacts of Potential United Nations General Assembly Nuclear Weapons Ban Treaty." It is dated October 17th.

A letter to allies says the United States strongly encourages NATO members on the UN Committee to vote "no" on starting negotiations for a nuclear ban treaty.

An attached US analysis says **a nuclear weapons ban treaty would aim to delegitimize the concept of nuclear deterrence upon which many US allies and partners depend.**

The UN committee vote on the resolution will take place on Thursday.

UN resolution on arms ban

October 28, 2016

UN committee OKs nuclear arms ban resolution

http://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20161028_12/

A UN General Assembly committee has approved a resolution calling for a treaty to ban nuclear weapons.

Japan, the only country that has suffered atomic bombings, was among the countries that opposed it, along with nuclear powers including the United States.

The resolution was adopted on Thursday by a majority vote at the General Assembly's First Committee on Disarmament.

The resolution submitted by about 50 non-nuclear weapons states calls for starting negotiations on a legally binding treaty in New York in March.

123 countries voted in favor, while 38 voted against. 16 countries abstained.

Among the nuclear powers, the United States and Russia opposed it. China and India abstained.

Japan voted against it. The country has been calling for the abolition of nuclear weapons, while under the US nuclear umbrella. But it said disarmament should be done in stages with the cooperation of nuclear and non-nuclear states.

Austrian disarmament ambassador Franz Josef Kuglitsch called the resolution the fruit of years of huge effort and conscience-building by many countries and civil society. Austria is one of the proponents of the resolution.

If adopted at a General Assembly session in December, treaty negotiations will start in March.

The Time has Come for a Global Mobilization Against Nuclear Weapons

October 28, 2016.

For the first time in the 71 years since nuclear weapons were used to incinerate two cities full of men women and children, an imaginative new international movement to abolish nuclear weapons has been launched. The launch date was October 27, 2016. It happened just yesterday afternoon.

On that day a resolution (L.41) was passed in the United Nations First Committee by an overwhelming majority of the member states. The resolution calls for the beginning of international negotiations next year (2017) to work out the terms of a legally-binding Treaty that would ban all nuclear weapons world-wide, in accordance with Article 6 of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

A total of 57 nations were co-sponsors of the resolution, with Austria, Brazil, Ireland, Mexico, Nigeria and South Africa taking the lead in drafting the text. Although the resolution was opposed by almost all of those countries having nuclear arsenals, and most of their allies, the staunch bloc of 38 "no" votes was swept aside by 136 votes in favour of L.41. Sixteen countries abstained from voting, including one member of Nato: the Netherlands. Other NATO members such as Canada voted against the resolution. Nevertheless, the resolution has been adopted by an overwhelming majority, and negotiations for a Treaty to abolish nuclear weapons will soon be underway.

Of course, the nuclear-weapons states hope to boycott these negotiations, and the members of NATO -- a military alliance that espouses nuclear weapons as "essential" for its security -- will also want to shun the proceedings. But there is a catch. Under the terms of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) these states are all legally obligated to undertake negotiations of exactly this nature. They can boycott the negotiations, but in doing so they will be in clear violation of their existing treaty obligations.

The Preamble of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) refers to

"the devastation that would be visited upon all mankind by a nuclear war and the consequent need to make every effort to avert the danger of such a war".

The goal of the NPT is the abolition of nuclear weapons:

"the cessation of the manufacture of nuclear weapons, the liquidation of all their existing stockpiles, and the elimination from national arsenals of nuclear weapons and the means of their delivery pursuant to a Treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control"

The NPT envisages a double strategy for abolishing nuclear weapons. Those states that do not have nuclear weapons promise not to acquire them, and those states that do have nuclear weapons promise to get rid of them. Article 6 states:

"Each of the Parties to the Treaty undertakes to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament, and on a Treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control."

In a unanimous ruling in 1996, the International Court of Justice declared that "There exists an obligation to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control". This is an obligation that cannot be shirked within any existing legal framework.

Common sense tells us that the nuclear-armed countries are not going to submit easily to such legalistic considerations, but the upcoming negotiations will put them on the defensive in the court of public opinion. With examples such as the fall of the Berlin Wall, the collapse of the apartheid regime in South Africa and the dissolution of the Soviet Empire in mind, no one should dismiss the power of mobilized public opinion -- especially when it is in concert with legal and political pressures, all of them focussed on the same goal: a legally-binding commitment to ban all nuclear weapons from the Earth.

The UN resolution passed yesterday, and the negotiations to begin next year, will not by themselves bring about the elimination of nuclear weapons, but the mobilization of people of good will world-wide may be enough to seal the deal. One thing is for sure. We will never know unless we try.

Gordon Edwards,

Excuse of US umbrella used again to justify "no" vote

October 28, 2016

U.S. 'nuclear umbrella' drove Japan's vote against U.N. resolution

<http://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20161028/p2a/00m/0na/010000c>

Japan's vote against a resolution calling for the start of negotiations to outlaw nuclear weapons at the U.N. General Assembly's First Committee on Oct. 27 took place out of a desire to appease the United States, which strongly opposed the resolution.

- **【Related】** U.N. committee passes draft resolution on nuke abolition talks

Despite being the only atomic bombed nation in the world, Japan, which has been protected under the so-called nuclear umbrella of the U.S., had been a self-anointed "bridge" between nuclear powers and non-nuclear states. But with its vote against the most recent nuclear disarmament resolution, it is bound to come under attack by non-nuclear nations and civic organizations calling for the abolition of nuclear weapons.

"(The resolution) is incongruent with our country's basic position of building up practical measures," Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida said Oct. 28. He added that Japan had been in contact with the U.S., indicating that Japan's dependence on the U.S. nuclear umbrella was a consideration in how Japan chose to vote.

Ambassador Toshio Sano, head of the Permanent Delegation of Japan to the Conference on Disarmament, said, "To promote nuclear arms reductions, it is indeed necessary for nuclear powers and non-nuclear powers to cooperate with each other." He thus expressed concern that a conflict between various

countries over the pact could adversely affect moves toward achieving the ultimate goal of nuclear disarmament.

Akira Kawasaki, who is on the international steering committee of the nongovernmental organization International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), was watching the proceedings in person. He criticized the Japanese government's move.

"That Japan voted against the resolution means that it stands on the side of nuclear states. It means that Japan is going from being an A-bombed country to an ally of nuclear states," he said.

An associate professor at Hiroshima City University's Hiroshima Peace Institute, Yasuhito Fukui, commented, "Japan will come under fire for voting against the resolution while at the same time saying that it's aiming for nuclear disarmament. Japan should have abstained from voting."

PM defends opposition to nuclear weapons ban

http://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20161028_34/

Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has defended the country's opposition to a UN resolution calling for a treaty to ban nuclear weapons.

Abe told a Lower House special committee on Friday that the decision to oppose the resolution was not made easily.

He was answering a question from an opposition lawmaker who said atomic bomb survivors are criticizing the government for not being determined to create a nuclear-free era and just following the United States and other Western nations.

Abe said the government wants to work toward a world without nuclear weapons as the only nation to have experienced atomic bombings.

Abe referred to another UN resolution submitted by Japan calling for the total abolition of nuclear weapons.

He said the United States for the first time became a co-sponsor of the Japan-sponsored resolution.

Abe said if Japan promotes a resolution to which the United States and other nuclear powers are opposing, these nations could become reluctant to offer understanding to the Japan-sponsored resolution. He said the government made the decision while considering these circumstances.

Wishy-washy

October 29, 2016

EDITORIAL: Japan's vote against nuke ban talks mocks its anti-nuke credo

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201610290021.html>

Japan's vote against a United Nations resolution calling for talks on a treaty to ban nuclear arms has made a mockery of its pledge to lead the movement toward a world without nuclear weapons, as the only country that has suffered nuclear attacks.

The U.N. General Assembly First Committee on Disarmament and International Security adopted a resolution to start formal negotiations next year on a treaty to outlaw nuclear weapons. In the vote, 123 nations supported the resolution, with 38 opposed.

The United Nations' decision to embark on full-fledged discussions on a legal framework to ban nuclear arms represents a historic move.

But Japan, along with nuclear powers the United States, Russia, Britain and France, voted against the measure.

Japan has been cautious about negotiating such a treaty. But its vote against the resolution is tantamount to declaring that it is now taking a position closer to those of the nuclear powers. It is hard to fathom the reason for Japan taking this extremely regrettable action.

No wonder the Japanese government's action has triggered a barrage of criticism by hibakusha, or the survivors of the 1945 atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, as well as various non-governmental organizations devoted to the cause of world peace both at home and abroad.

It is obvious that the use of nuclear weapons is inhumanity at its worst. But there is no international law that bans nuclear arms.

Austria and other non-nuclear states that have sponsored the resolution have made a convincing case for negotiating a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons as a first step toward their elimination.

The United States has expressed especially strong opposition to the move. The principal reason for Washington's vehement objection is that the proposed treaty would disturb the delicate balance of international security based on nuclear deterrence.

The United States has also called on its allies protected by its "nuclear umbrella," including Japan and NATO members, to vote against the resolution, claiming that their security, too, would be affected by the envisioned treaty.

As a result, South Korea, Australia and Germany, as well as Japan, were also among the countries that opposed the measure.

The U.N. committee adopted a separate resolution promoted by Japan calling for gradual cuts in the global stockpile of nuclear weapons. The United States supported this resolution.

Explaining Tokyo's vote, Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida said starting negotiations on a nuclear ban treaty is inconsistent with Japan's basic approach to nuclear disarmament.

Many Japanese government policymakers believe the protection of the deterrent effect of the U.S. nuclear arsenal is essential for Japan's own national security at a time when the security environment in East Asia is deteriorating due partly to North Korea's continued development of nuclear arms and missiles.

But the proponents of a ban treaty are not calling for an immediate end to dependence on the extended U.S. nuclear deterrence. These non-nuclear states are only advocating the beginning of talks on such a treaty.

How to pursue both nuclear arms reductions and national security is a challenge the world should tackle through international negotiations.

The nuclear powers are acting too inflexibly by opposing even the establishment of a conference for such negotiations.

Japan and other U.S. allies that have followed Washington's lead will face some serious questions about their independence.

The resolution is now set to be adopted in a U.N. General Assembly session by the end of this year. The first round of negotiations on a nuclear ban treaty is expected to be held in March next year.

The United States and other nuclear powers have indicated they will boycott the talks. But Kishida has said Japan will be at the negotiating table.

The rift between nuclear and non-nuclear states is deeper than ever before.

Japan should now try to play an active role in the efforts to narrow the gap between the positions of both camps by persuading the nuclear powers to join the negotiations.

That's the way for Japan to maintain the credibility of its commitment to the elimination of nuclear arms as the nation that was once devastated by atomic bombs.

October 29, 2016

Editorial: Is Japan giving up mediator role in nuke ban treaty talks?

<http://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20161029/p2a/00m/0na/012000c>

The U.N. General Assembly's First Committee on Oct. 27 approved a draft resolution calling for the start of negotiations next year to legally ban nuclear weapons, while Japan -- the only nuclear-bombed country in the world -- opposed it.

- **【Related】** U.N. committee passes draft resolution on nuke abolition talks
- **【Related】** U.S. 'nuclear umbrella' drove Japan's vote against U.N. resolution

While Japan has proclaimed itself a "mediator" between nuclear and non-nuclear powers, there's no way it can fulfill such a role while objecting to what is seen as a historic step forward to a world without nuclear weapons.

The International Court of Justice in 1996 issued an advisory opinion that the use of nuclear weapons generally runs counter to humanitarian law, sparking a 20-year debate over a new nuclear weapons ban treaty. The U.N. General Assembly is expected to adopt the draft resolution at a plenary session in December and start negotiations next year. Moves to institute a nuclear weapons ban treaty are finally taking shape.

The draft resolution was jointly proposed by countries including Austria and Mexico and was approved by a total of 123 countries. However, 38 countries -- including Japan and nuclear powers such as the United States, Russia, Britain and France -- opposed it, while China and 15 other countries abstained.

Although Japan suffered the U.S. atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki toward the end of World War II, the country has settled for protection under the U.S. "nuclear umbrella." The Japanese government insists that nuclear disarmament should be promoted in stages with cooperation between nuclear and non-nuclear powers, taking both the inhumane nature of nuclear weapons and the security environment into consideration.

Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida explained the reason why Japan rejected the draft resolution, saying, "It will further cultivate conflict and deepen the rifts between nuclear and non-nuclear nations." However, if there is deep conflict between the two parties, that is all the more reason for Japan not to have turned down the proposed resolution. It raises questions about Japan's legitimacy as a "mediator" between nuclear haves and have-nots.

The U.S. staunchly objected to the draft resolution, saying that it would have negative repercussions on its nuclear deterrence and that of its allies. The U.S. even went so far as to demand that NATO members and Asian countries vote against the draft resolution. As a result, countries dependent on U.S. nuclear deterrence -- including Australia, Canada, Germany and South Korea -- turned down the proposed resolution. Japan is also believed to have been pressured to nix the motion.

It is unacceptable that the U.S., which has advocated a world without nuclear weapons, has adopted a negative stance that could further deepen the divide between nuclear and non-nuclear countries.

As the draft resolution carries little of what a ban treaty may end up containing, details are to be worked out after the resolution is fully adopted. Negotiations over the introduction of the treaty are scheduled to start in March next year, and Foreign Minister Kishida has expressed a positive attitude toward Japan's participation in the talks. We urge the Japanese government to join the negotiations proactively and strive to bridge the gap between nuclear and non-nuclear powers.

In the meantime, a Japan-sponsored draft resolution calling for the abolition of nuclear weapons was also adopted with a majority of 167 countries. The U.S., which abstained from the vote last year, co-sponsored the resolution.

In the eyes of the international community, Japan's wishy-washy stance -- expressing aspirations toward the elimination nuclear weapons while rejecting a practical move toward a nuclear weapons ban treaty -- is hard to understand and only invites skepticism.

Special day in world's history

Voting Started			27-Oct-16		17:59:37	
A/C.1/71/L.41						
Item 98 (kk) WHOLE Taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations						
AFGHANISTAN	CAMEROON	FRANCE	KYRGYZSTAN	NETHERLANDS	SERBIA	UKRAINE
ALBANIA	CANADA	GABON	LAO PDR	NEW ZEALAND	SEYCHELLES	UNITED ARAB EMIR
ALGERIA	CENTRAL AFR REP...	GAMBIA	LATVIA	NICARAGUA	SIERRA LEONE	UNITED KINGDOM
ANDORRA	CHAD	GEORGIA	LEBANON	NIGER	SINGAPORE	UNITED REP TANZA...
ANGOLA	CHILE	GERMANY	LESOTHO	NIGERIA	SLOVAKIA	UNITED STATES
ANTIGUA-BARBUDA	CHINA	GHANA	LIBERIA	NORWAY	SLOVENIA	URUGUAY
ARGENTINA	COLOMBIA	GREECE	LIBYA	OMAN	SOLOMON ISLANDS	UZBEKISTAN
ARMENIA	COMOROS	GRENADA	LIECHTENSTEIN	PAKISTAN	SOMALIA	VANUATU
AUSTRALIA	CONGO	GUATEMALA	LITHUANIA	PALAU	SOUTH AFRICA	VENEZUELA (BOLIV...
AUSTRIA	COSTA RICA	GUINEA	LUXEMBOURG	PANAMA	SOUTH SUDAN	VIET NAM
AZERBAIJAN	COTE D'IVOIRE	GUYANA	MADAGASCAR	PAPUA NEW GUINEA	SPAIN	YEMEN
BAHAMAS	CROATIA	HAITI	MALAWI	PARAGUAY	SRI LANKA	ZAMBIA
BAHRAIN	CUBA	HONDURAS	MALAYSIA	PERU	SUDAN	ZIMBABWE
BANGLADESH	CYPRUS	HUNGARY	MALDIVES	PHILIPPINES	SURINAME	
BARBADOS	CZECH REPUBLIC	ICELAND	MALI	POLAND	SWAZILAND	
BELARUS	DEM PR OF KOREA	INDIA	MALTA	PORTUGAL	SWEDEN	
BELGIUM	DEM REP OF CONGO	INDONESIA	MARSHALL ISLANDS	QATAR	SWITZERLAND	
BELIZE	DENMARK	IRAQI ISLAMIC REP...	MAURITANIA	REP OF KOREA	SYRIAN ARAB REP...	
BENIN	DJIBOUTI	IRAQ	MAURITIUS	REP OF MOLDOVA	TAJIKISTAN	
BHUTAN	DOMINICA	IRELAND	MEXICO	ROMANIA	THAILAND	
BOLIVIA (PLURINAT...	DOMINICAN REP...	ISRAEL	MICRONESIA (FS)	RUSSIAN FED...	THE FYR MACEDONIA	
BOSNIA-HERZEGOVY...	ECUADOR	ITALY	MONACO	RWANDA	TIMOR-LESTE	
BOTSWANA	EGYPT	JAMAICA	MONGOLIA	SAINT KITTS-NEVIS	TOGO	
BRAZIL	EL SALVADOR	JORDAN	MONTENEGRO	SAINT LUCIA	TONGA	
BRUNEI DARUSSAL...	EQUATORIAL GUINEA	JAPAN	MOROCCO	SAINT VINCENT-GR...	TRINIDAD AND TOB...	
BULGARIA	ERITREA	KAZAKHSTAN	MOZAMBIQUE	SAMOA	TUNISIA	
BURKINA FASO	ESTONIA	KENYA	MYANMAR	SAN MARINO	TURKEY	
BURUNDI	ETHIOPIA	KIRIBATI	NAMIBIA	SAO TOME-PRINCIPE	TURKMENISTAN	
CABO VERDE	FIJI	KUWAIT	NAURU	SAUDI ARABIA	TUVALU	
CAMBODIA	FINLAND		NEPAL	SENEGAL	UGANDA	
IN FAVOUR: 123			AGAINST: 38		ABSTENTION: 16	
United Nations Webcast: webtv.un.org						

<http://www.icanw.org/campaign-news/results/>

27 October 2016: the day when the big reversal in history became possible

<http://acdn.net/spip/spip.php?article1032&lang=en>

Published 29 October 2016

Published in French 29 October 2016

What a fantastic day. It will count as a red letter day in contemporary history – indeed in world history. Ever since 6 August 1945, the first time an atom bomb was exploded “on a populous city” and by itself, in an instant, caused tens of thousands of deaths, humankind has been living haunted by a possible apocalypse, with the feeling that we might never end to this age of nuclear terror.

But this 27 October 2016 saw three events occur successively in Paris, Brussels and New York, all directed towards an exit from the nuclear age, with the last one opening a door to a change in era.

Paris

In Paris, 101 MPs and senators published an Appeal for a Referendum on the question: « Do you want France to negotiate and ratify with all the States concerned a treaty to ban and completely eliminate nuclear weapons, under mutual and international control that is strict and effective? » This was not a petition or a mere opinion-piece. The appeal that they make to their colleagues and to all French voters is one that these parliamentarians made their own by signing a referendum bill. When this bill gathers the signatures of 185 MPs and senators (1/5 of the Parliament), it will have to be supported by 10% of registered voters (about 4.5 million), and then the French people, gagged for 70 years, will be able to have their say. This is the only available way to make France change her policies, and now it has been opened, by parliamentarians many of whom are closer to the current governmental majority than to the opposition.

Brussels

A few hours later, in Brussels, the European Parliament examined and adopted by 415 votes FOR, 124 AGAINST and 74 abstentions, a resolution on the same subject. It encouraged the UN General Assembly to convene a conference in 2017 tasked with negotiating a “legally binding instrument” – a treaty to outlaw nuclear weapons; it invited the EU member states to support the calling of such a conference and to participate constructively in its process; and it invited the EU’s high representative for foreign affairs, Federica Mogherini, to involve herself actively in the negotiation process. That huge majority was possible only through a convergence of leftwing, rightwing and centrist parties, going beyond usual alignments. The parliamentarians are closer to the voters than the governments are.

New York

Finally in New York, around 6pm local time (midnight in Paris), the First Committee of the UN General Assembly, the Disarmament Committee, examined a resolution tabled by 6 countries (Austria, Brazil, Ireland, Mexico, Nigeria and South Africa) which had already received support from 57 states altogether. The hall was full as it is on great days. 177 nations were represented. And the vote took place. There too there was a huge majority in favour of opening negotiations on a nuclear ban treaty: 123 FOR, 38 AGAINST, 16 abstentions. And in New York it was much more than a simple wish. It was a decision. It will have to be passed by the General Assembly in a plenary session, but this vote, scheduled for early December, is little more than a formality, since the nations voting will be the same as those that voted this week, possibly augmented by a dozen or more member states absent - states which are all non-nuclear, and few of which are under the US “nuclear umbrella”.

The stakes are enormous, because, as a group of Nobel Peace laureates said two weeks back, if the negotiations beginning in 2017 result in a ban treaty, even if the nuclear powers do not take part and

refuse to sign it at the outset, this treaty will “create a powerful new norm about nuclear weapons, defining them not as the status symbols of great nations, but as the badges of shame of rogue nations.”

The nuclear states reveal their colours

Voting against the First Committee resolution were 4 of the P5 – the nuclear states within the NPT (Non-Proliferation Treaty) which also have permanent seats on the Security Council: USA, China, UK, Russia and France – plus one unofficial nuclear state, Israel (outside the NPT). The 33 other votes against were mostly allies of the USA either within NATO, or outside it like South Korea, Australia and Japan. The USA had been twisting arms for weeks to make them vote against. Thus, besides the two nuclear states in the EU (France and the UK still in despite the Brexit vote), most European governments voted against the opinion of the European Parliament, with the notable exception of the Netherlands which abstained despite hosting some US nuclear weapons – the Dutch Parliament last May had imposed a different line on their government.

Note that 3 nuclear nations abstained: China (the 5th of the P5 nations), India and Pakistan. Only one voted for the resolution... North Korea! This “rogue state” recently denounced again by the “international community” for proliferation, gave itself the luxury of saying yes to a ban on nuclear weapons, thus pushing its despisers into the camp of the rogue nations and showing up their perfect hypocrisy - without great risk of being disarmed, since they are the self-appointed guardians of the nuclear temple.

Resolution L41

Taking inspiration from the recommendations adopted in Geneva on 19 August 2016, with the support of over 100 countries, by an ad hoc UN Working Group whose terms it echoed, this Resolution:

- decides to convene in 2017 a UN conference tasked with negotiating a “binding judicial instrument” to outlaw nuclear weapons and bring about their complete elimination;
- encourages all UN member states to take part in this conference;
- decide that this conference will meet in New York and will follow the usual General Assembly procedures – unless it decides otherwise – from 27 to 31 March and from 15 June to 7 July, with the participation and contribution of representatives of international organisations and civil society;
- calls on all states participating to make every effort to conclude as quickly as possible a binding judicial instrument to outlaw nuclear weapons and bring about their complete elimination;
- decides that the conference will submit a report on progress to the 72nd session of the General Assembly (in late 2017) which will assess progress and will decide how to follow it up;
- asks the Secretary-General to provide all necessary support for the holding of the conference and to transmit its report to various bodies specified; and
- decides to include in the provisional agenda of the 72nd GA session an item entitled “Advancing negotiations on multilateral nuclear disarmament”.

"What a fabulous day !"

The road leading to a world without nuclear weapons is still long and strewn with pitfalls. Over 15 000 bombs are still hanging over our heads. The states that possess them, stigmatised by a ban treaty that they will ultimately have to sign, will have to work out the means of their own disarmament – and do so despite their military-industrial and nuclear lobbies that still hold very strong positions. There will be immense resistance, one suspects.

But for the first time since 1945 the nuclear apocalypse has ceased to be a sure destiny. For the first time, the abolition of nuclear weapons – their banning and their total elimination – has become a serious prospect. That is no longer a sweet starry-eyed dream. It is written into the diplomatic agendas of the UN, of Europe and even of France – provided the referendum takes place and permits the French people to decide on it.

In France and elsewhere it is now the peoples of the world who need to have their say to force the concerned governments (all are concerned, and firstly the nuclear powers) to move forward from promises to action and to bring to effective existence a world without nuclear weapons.

Jean-Marie Matagne, 29 Octobre 2016

contact@acdn.net

Hans Blix on nuclear arms elimination

October 30, 2016

INTERVIEW/ Former IAEA director general: Japan can lead in banning nukes

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201610300031.html>

By ICHIRO MATSUO/ Correspondent

Japan should take the lead in efforts to eliminate nuclear weapons, says Dr. Hans Blix, former director general of International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), but Tokyo voted against a U.N. resolution for nuclear disarmament.

Draft resolution L41, “Taking Forward Multilateral Nuclear Disarmament Negotiations,” was adopted on Oct. 27 by majority support at the plenary session of First Committee of United Nations General Assembly. A group of countries, including Mexico, Austria and South Africa, came up with the humanitarian initiative, and 50 countries co-sponsored the draft resolution to initiate negotiations in 2017 for a legally binding instrument to ban nuclear weapons.

Although the nuclear weapon states and most U.S. allies--including Japan--voted “no,” 123 of the 193 U.N. members voted in favor of the draft resolution.

Before the resolution was adopted, Blix, a former Swedish foreign minister, expressed his support for the initiative in an interview with The Asahi Shimbun.

He said Japan can play a vital role in abolishing nuclear weapons, particularly in East Asia.

Excerpts of the interview follow.

* * *

I am in favor of this resolution. I know the arguments against, so negotiating such a convention by 2017 will not lead to the target, at least not within a short time. However, what is the alternative that they propose? It is to be “patient, step-by-step.” But that has been tried now for many decades without any results.

Now, if you look at the step-by-step approach, one could say that at the present time, we think there are up to some 20,000 nuclear weapons in the world, and that is an enormous reduction from the number during the peak of the Cold War. However, they have reduced the redundancy.

We know that the effect of this convention on public opinion is there. (It is) not sufficient (enough) to achieve an (immediate) stopping of nuclear weapons, but we do know that it can have an effect in the long run.

We have had a convention on cluster bombs (and) a land mines convention. We must remember the 1925 Geneva Protocol against biological and chemical weapons. It took decades, I think, before the United States ratified it, but they did eventually.

You already have stigmatization (on nuclear weapons). We haven't had any use for nuclear weapons since 1945, after all. So the taboo is there, but it is a fragile taboo.

I think Mr. Donald Trump has said, "If we have these weapons, why can't we use them?" So it is a fragile thing. And whatever you can do to strengthen that (taboo), yes, I think that is desirable.

I think the United States should not be against this resolution. And Japan is the country that has the greatest awareness of the evil of nuclear weapons, and I think, therefore, it is natural (for Japan) to take a lead in this activity (toward eliminating nuclear weapons).

I am more worried about Asia because you have built-in conflicts that have not erupted, thank God, yet. But the closest thing to an eruption that we see is North Korea.

We know that when the North Koreans send a missile across the airspace of Japan, there begins to be voices in Japan in favor of nuclear weapons. Technically, the Japanese can acquire nuclear weapons in no time at all, but the political, strategic atmosphere in the Far East will be drastically changed.

I think one of the most urgent and one of the most difficult negotiation problems you have today is: How can one achieve a nuclear-free Korean Peninsula?

"The immoral realities of the present world"

1 November, 2016

Dear Friends,

It is indeed regrettable that Japan, the world's sole victim of atomic bombings should have voted against the UN resolution of 28 October,

a landmark resolution to launch negotiations in 2017 on a treaty outlawing nuclear weapons.

Survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki have naturally expressed their anger and disappointment.

Conscientious Japanese people will all agree that it is a historic mission of Japan to contribute to the accomplishment of true denuclearization, both civilian and military.

The will of the majority of the Japanese people has once again been belittled. This makes one question the governability of Japan.

We are reminded of the immoral realities of the present world.

The preset crisis the world is confronted with is neither an economic crisis nor a monetary one. It is **a crisis of civilization**. The solution requires the mobilization of human wisdom on the widest global scale. Mankind faces a change of way of life not only in Japan, but the entire world.

The deeply-rooted cause of this crisis is the **universally prevalent lack of ethics**. It is against fundamental ethics to abuse and exhaust natural resources that belong to future generations and leave behind permanently poisonous nuclear waste and enormous financial debts. It is a matter of great urgency to put an end to this civilization based on greed.

Now is the time for us to transform it into a civilization based on “maternal culture” that gives the supreme value to life, and not to economy as heretofore. It can be defined as a maternal civilization based on ethics and solidarity that respects the environment and the interests of future generations.

Under such circumstances, it is badly needed to hold a United Nations Ethics Summit as early as possible and to create an “International Day for Global Ethics” that will enable all nations, year by year, to reflect on the importance of ethics.

The will of heavens and the earth(the law of history) tells us that immorality cannot last long. The main stream of the world has started to change.

The shift from the current paternal civilization, based on power and domination, to a maternal civilization, based on harmony and solidarity, is now becoming visible with increasing female top leaders.

The retreat from the Tokyo Olympic Games 2020 will start changing Japan.

It is simply immoral to continue to rely on the false assertion that Fukushima is under control. The IOC has not yet responded to the request of verification coming from the civil society. It is to be deplored that the departure from the spirit of the Olympic Games is attaining its limitations due to its excessive commercialization more and more disclosed recently in connection with Governor Yuriko Koike’s new initiative to reduce the Olympic expenditure.

Please allow me to count on your understanding and support.

With warmest regards,
Mitsuhei Murata
Former Ambassador to Switzerland

Japan's contradictory behaviour

November 3, 2016

Japan’s hypocritical nuclear stance

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2016/11/03/editorials/japans-hypocritical-nuclear-stance/#.WBtRRsmDmos>

Japan's vote at the United Nations last week to oppose a resolution to start talks on a treaty outlawing nuclear weapons is regrettable. It contradicts the nation's long-standing call for the elimination of such weapons as the sole country to have suffered nuclear attacks. Tokyo's latest move — which reflects the government's reliance on the U.S. nuclear umbrella for the nation's security — not only runs counter to the wishes of survivors of the 1945 Hiroshima and Nagasaki atomic bombings but will weaken its voice in international efforts to rid the world of nuclear arms.

On Oct. 27, the First Committee of the U.N. General Assembly, which deals with disarmament and international security, adopted the resolution, with 123 nations voting in favor, 38 against it and 16 abstaining. Six nuclear powers — the United States, Russia, Britain, France and Israel — voted against it, backed by U.S. allies such as Japan, South Korea, Germany and Australia. Three nuclear powers — China, India and Pakistan — abstained. Surprisingly, North Korea, which recently carried out a fifth nuclear weapons test, voted in favor.

Austria, Brazil, Ireland, Mexico, Nigeria and South Africa played leading roles in drafting the resolution and a total of 57 nations co-sponsored it, citing deep concerns about “catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons.” The resolution, which seeks to set up a U.N. conference in March to negotiate a “legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading towards their total elimination,” will be put to a General Assembly vote in December.

Even if it is adopted by the General Assembly, the nuclear powers that opposed the resolution will most likely refuse to join the negotiations. Even if such a treaty comes into force, it is unlikely to have any practical effect of immediately eliminating nuclear arms because of the absence of cooperation from the nuclear powers. Yet it will be significant to legally stigmatize nuclear weapons — which could serve as a strong force to start concrete steps toward nuclear disarmament.

The nuclear powers should pay attention to the frustration of non-nuclear states about the lack of progress in global nuclear disarmament efforts. The Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty has yet to come into force 20 years after it was negotiated. Among countries that have either not signed or ratified the treaty are the U.S., China, Israel, North Korea, Pakistan and India. The world still has a stockpile of more than 15,000 nuclear weapons — most of them in the military arsenals of the U.S. and Russia.

Explaining Tokyo's opposition to the resolution, Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida said it did not suit Japan's pursuit of a nuclear weapons-free world through cumulative concrete and practical measures and that negotiating a treaty banning nuclear arms when security in Northeast Asia is confronted with North Korea's nuclear and missile development and threats from China would deepen a schism between the haves and have-nots. But he also said that Japan is ready to join the U.N. talks on the treaty. In essence, Japan wants a gradual approach to eliminating nuclear arms through cooperation between the nuclear powers and non-nuclear states.

It is clear, however, that the U.S. put pressure on its allies, including Japan, to oppose the resolution. The U.S. government reportedly sent a letter dated Oct. 17 to NATO member nations urging them to “vote against negotiations on a nuclear treaty ban, not to merely abstain” and “to refrain from” joining talks on such a treaty. The letter said such a treaty, if enforced, “could have a direct impact on the U.S. ability to meet its NATO and Asia/Pacific extended deterrence commitments and the ability of our allies and partners to engage in joint defense operations with the United States and other nuclear weapons states.” A government official has disclosed that Washington made similar representations to Japan.

It would be logical to assume that Japanese officials believed they cannot resist such pressures given Japan's dependence on the U.S. nuclear umbrella. But did it not occur to them that opposing the resolution would deprive Japan of moral credibility in its repeated calls for creating a nuclear weapons-free world, or

could they not at least have considered abstaining from the vote — just like the Netherlands, a NATO member, did — even merely as a gesture? It is absurd to think that the U.S. would not care about Japan's unique and special position as the only country to have experienced nuclear attacks.

Japan submitted a resolution calling for the abolition of nuclear weapons for the 23rd time in a row this year and it was adopted the same day as the one to begin talks on the nuclear weapons ban treaty cleared the same U.N. committee — with 167 nations in favor, four countries — China, North Korea, Russia and Syria — voting against and 17 abstaining. The U.S., which abstained from the vote last year, joined in co-sponsoring the resolution. The development raises suspicions that Tokyo opposed the resolution for the nuclear weapons ban treaty as a quid pro quo for Washington's support of Japan's resolution.

Given its contradictory behavior, it will be extremely difficult for Japan to regain the trust of other nations in U.N. efforts to seek the elimination of nuclear weapons.

Japan-India Pact

<http://thewire.in/78479/india-japan-relations-nuclear-deal/>

Nuclear Deal, Infrastructure Projects and Handling China: What to Expect From Modi's Japan Visit

By Pallavi Aiyar on 08/11/2016 • Leave a comment

There are several points still up for discussion before the India-Japan nuclear accord becomes a reality, including Japanese apprehensions on India misusing nuclear technology.

Tokyo: Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's upcoming two-day visit to Japan takes place at a time when Asia's second largest and third largest economies are increasingly finding common strategic ground. The November 11-12 meeting will be the third annual summit between Modi and Shinzo Abe, his Japanese counterpart. A long-anticipated nuclear civilian energy deal is the likely headline to emerge. But a raft of other issues are also on the agenda, including measures to give bilateral economic ties a fillip, defence cooperation, infrastructure projects both in India and third countries like Iran, as well as the sensitive, but crucial, issue of dealing with China's expanding presence in the region.

Nuclear negotiations

The nuclear treaty will not only pave the way for Japan to export nuclear technology to India's vast market, it is also a necessity for enabling India's nuclear deals with the US, France and other countries. Key elements of nuclear reactors, including safety components and the domes of nuclear power plants, are a near-Japanese monopoly. Any deal would be significant for firms like GE-Hitachi, Toshiba's Westinghouse Electric Company and Mitsubishi-Areva.

Negotiations over the nuclear accord have been ongoing since 2008, following US-led efforts to facilitate India's access to civilian nuclear energy technologies, despite India not being a signatory to the nuclear non-proliferation treaty. The 2011 Fukushima nuclear disaster in Japan temporarily halted discussions. These have since restarted, but there remain strong concerns in Japan over the possible misuse by India of nuclear technology transfers.

There will, therefore, almost certainly be key provisions in any deal aimed at allaying Japanese apprehensions, most likely a provision to cancel or suspend the accord in the event of India breaking its

self-imposed moratorium on nuclear testing. This has been a Japanese demand since the two sides began their negotiations seven years ago. India, which successfully kept such an explicit condition out of its nuclear cooperation agreement with the US in 2007 (and with every other nuclear partner since then), has so far been reluctant to tie termination of the agreement to a nuclear test by the country.

According to Hisanori Nei, professor and nuclear energy expert at Tokyo's National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies, **Japan will permit Indian power producers to reprocess spent fuel at designated facilities** on condition that the country accepts comprehensive inspections by the International Atomic Energy Agency. But this is something that will be difficult for India to agree to.

A final sticking point is the question of **liability in the event of a nuclear accident**. "It is difficult to imagine that the nuclear sector is a total outlier to the general chaos of the business operating environment in India," explained Jeff Kingston, the director of the Asian studies programme at Tokyo's Temple University. Modi has been seeking to address the concerns of nuclear vendors on the matter of liability. It's not clear yet that he's done enough.

Kingston believes that Abe should be able to push a nuclear accord with India through the parliament by early 2017. He doubts there will be much political opposition, despite the fact that there are many, even within the prime minister's own Liberal Democratic Party, who are against nuclear energy. (Polls indicate that up to 70% of the Japanese population is opposed to developing nuclear power.)

Like Kingston, most experts in Japan are optimistic that despite the challenges, the deal will be struck. **Abe will sell it to a nuclear-sceptic Japanese parliament and public by embedding it in the larger context of Japanese-India ties.** Geo-strategic benefits, India's large export market and investment opportunities will be the sweeteners.

"I don't think public opinion will be an obstacle," said Nei, explaining that the accord did not loom large in public discourse in Japan. "The media might cover it for a week or so, and then it will be easily forgotten."

Economic ties

Economic ties will be the other main focus of the summit. Modi wants to boost India's economic growth by upgrading infrastructure, strengthening manufacturing and developing a network of "smart" cities – all of which would benefit from Japanese investments and technology. For his part, Abe is trying to fire up a Japanese economy that has been stuck in a holding pattern for two decades. India with its large market and growing middle-class can provide new sources of exports and investment opportunities for Japan. Yet, despite this natural fit, economic ties are not as robust as might be expected. India-Japan trade in 2015-2016 was only \$14.51 billion, a decrease of 6.47% over the previous year. In contrast, India-China trade was worth over \$70 billion, while Japan-China trade is at about \$350 billion. Trade with India is just 1% of Japan's total foreign trade. And although Japan is the largest bilateral donor for India, over the past three years Japanese firms have invested more in countries like Vietnam and Indonesia rather than India. Abe's government has outpaced China in investment pledges to India, promising to funnel about 3.5 trillion yen (\$29 billion) in infrastructure loans, financing and public and private investment. New Delhi has also set up a special office to promote investments from Japan. At their first summit meeting in 2014, the two leaders vowed to double direct investment within five years.

Against this backdrop, there will likely be announcements of some new investments at this week's meeting, in addition to the mega-infrastructure projects in India that Japan is already an investor in, such as the Ahmedabad-Mumbai High Speed Rail, the Western Dedicated Freight Corridor and the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor.

However, as Hiroshi Hirabayashi, president of the Japan-India Association and former ambassador to India, put it, "there are too many negative stories from Japanese investors in their experience in India." He cited a litany of cases from the unhappy merger of pharma heavyweights Ranbaxy and Daiichi Sanyko, to

NTT Docomo's sour experience with Tata Teleservices and Mitsubishi Chemical's decision to pull out of a massive proposed investment in West Bengal.

According to Hirabayashi, while Modi's visit cannot be expected to solve bilateral problems between companies, he can help to address issues of legality and broad-business policy. The main outcome of the summit, according to the former ambassador, will not be concrete economic problem solving, as much as positive atmospherics.

The symbolism of the visit acquires special significance against the evolving geo-strategic cartography of the region, in particular, Beijing's rising clout and territorial claims. China is expanding its deep-water naval presence and asserts sovereignty over disputed areas of the East and South China Sea and Indian Ocean region, parts of which Japan also claims. India has its own territorial dispute with Beijing along the 4,000-km land boundary they share.

Closer ties between Japan and India are viewed with apprehension in Beijing. According to Japanese news reports, the visit will see India purchasing 12 US-2i amphibious aircraft from manufacturer ShinMaywa Industries at a price tag of between \$1.5 and \$1.6 billion. The aircraft sale will be one of Tokyo's first arms deals since Japan lifted its 50-year ban on weapons exports in 2014. It will be a first for Japan, which has traditionally been reticent to supply Japanese-made military hardware to other countries. The purchase is certain to rile Beijing, which sees any military closeness between Japan and India as a potential threat.

Tokyo and New Delhi already participate in annual joint military exercises along with the US.

Kingston points out that while India continues its policy of hedging, keeping up bilateral ties with both Japan and China, New Delhi is "tilting" closer to Japan than was previously the case. However, although Japan would like to see India make a strong statement of support on its claims against China in the East China Sea, it is unlikely that Modi will do so, beyond a possible reference to upholding the rule of law in settling disputes.

A final area for discussion at the summit might be the furthering of cooperation in infrastructure projects with incidental implications for China. One example is potential Japanese investment in India's development of the Chabahar Port project in Iran, something Tokyo has expressed interest in. This would work towards counteracting the Chinese dominance of infrastructure projects in India's neighbourhood and would help elevate New Delhi's political and economic profile in the region.

Modi and Abe have had a long courtship. Much has been written about the affinity between the two leaders. When the Japanese prime minister signed up for Twitter, Modi was famously the first world leader he followed. If the nuclear deal, in particular, is finally inked this week, it will go some way in demonstrating that their courting is heading towards a firm commitment.

November 7, 2016

Significant headway' on final text before PM Narendra Modi's Japan visit

<http://indianexpress.com/article/business/business-others/civil-nuclear-cooperation-agreement-significant-headway-on-final-text-before-pm-narendra-modis-japan-visit-3740653/>

During the last meeting between the two prime ministers in New Delhi last December, it was announced that the two sides have agreed “in principle” on inking the civil nuclear agreement.

Negotiations on a final text of the proposed Civil Nuclear Cooperation Agreement between India and Japan have made “significant headway”, with both sides learnt to be working overtime on the technical details ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s visit to Japan on November 11-12.

During the last meeting between the two prime ministers in New Delhi last December, it was announced that the two sides have agreed “in principle” on inking the civil nuclear agreement. The details that the two sides are trying to forge a consensus on include **the contentious issue of reprocessing of spent fuel**. Officials involved in the exercise indicated that **Japan is open to somewhat softening its stance on allowing the reprocessing of spent nuclear fuel from Japan-made reactors, something that could have a significant bearing on the progress of the two atomic projects under discussion involving American nuclear vendors — GE-Hitachi and Toshiba-Westinghouse**.

If Japan were to go ahead and ink a nuclear deal with India, it could be a crucial determining factor as the two US reactor vendors, as well as a range of other global nuclear reactor manufacturers, source the most critical equipment in a reactor — the calandria or reactor vessel — from Japanese heavy forging major Japan Steel Works (JSW). **Experts point to the fact that the transfer of Japanese technology to India for civilian use requires a nuclear pact, but Tokyo has so far desisted from initiating one as India has not signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).**

Globally, apart from Japan’s JSW, there are just three major heavy forging capacities in operation worldwide that can fabricate large single-piece pressure vessels for nuclear reactors — Creusot Forge (a subsidiary of France’s Areva group), Russia’s OMZ Izhora and Chinese state-owned firm China First Heavy Industries. But **JSW dominates the nuclear forgings business, accounting for an estimated 80 per cent of the world market for large forged components for nuclear plants and owns the world’s only plant capable of producing the central part of a large-size reactor’s containment vessel in a single piece from a 600-tonne ingot, which reduces radiation risk**.

All the global suppliers are booked with orders for at least the next five years as the most critical issue for accelerating nuclear power plant construction is the availability of heavy engineering plants to make the reactor components, especially for units of over 1,000 MWe (mega watt electric).

While Toshiba-Westinghouse’s AP1000 pressure vessel closure head and three complex steam generator parts can only be made by JSW, the Japanese firm has advance orders from GE-Hitachi for fabricating components for its ABWR and ESBWR range of boiling water reactors.

JSW also has the distinction of supplying the pressure vessels for Areva’s first two 1650 MWe EPR projects in Finland and France. Reactor vendors prefer large forgings to be integral, as single products, but it is possible to use split forgings that are welded together. These welds then need checking through the life of the plant.

An NPCIL official said the process of bridging the difference over the substantive issues on the proposed India-Japan nuclear agreement in on and that both countries had made significant progress in the negotiations on civil nuclear cooperation. JSW had set up a marketing office in India in 2009 through a subsidiary — JSW India Pvt Ltd.

November 1, 2016

Japan to sign nuclear pact with India

http://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20161101_03/

Japan will sign an agreement on nuclear energy technology with India during a visit by Prime Minister Narendra Modi scheduled to start on November 10th.

The agreement will be Japan's first such deal with a non-signatory of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. It will allow Japan to export nuclear power technology to India.

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe met with Modi in India last December and they came to a basic agreement regarding the deal.

The two governments have been negotiating the details of the agreement and the date of the signing.

There is concern in Japan about forming a deal with India, which has conducted nuclear tests.

The pact is expected to include a provision that prohibits the technology from being used for military purposes. If India conducts further nuclear tests, the deal would likely be suspended.

Japan has similar deals with 14 countries and territories.

Japan, India to sign energy pact on condition of no nuclear tests

THE ASAHI SHIMBUN

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201611010047.html>

Japan and India will sign a nuclear energy pact in mid-November that allows Tokyo to opt out if the South Asian nation tests its nuclear weapons, sources said.

The agreement, the first by Japan with a nation that has not ratified the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, will be signed when Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi visits Japan later this month, a high-ranking Foreign Ministry official said.

The agreement will enable Japan to export its nuclear energy technology for private-sector use in India. But the sources said wording in the pact will give Japan, which has long pushed for nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation, the option of ending cooperation if India conducts a nuclear test.

At a meeting in New Delhi in December 2015, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and Modi agreed in principle to sign a nuclear energy agreement. However, Abe told his Indian counterpart, "We will discontinue cooperation should India conduct a nuclear test."

Diplomats of the two nations have since held discussions on the agreement.

Japanese diplomats asked for wording that could be interpreted to mean Japan can cease cooperation in the event of an Indian nuclear test after the bilateral agreement takes effect.

Although Indian officials were hesitant about such wording because of concerns it could constrain India's national security policy, they also showed an understanding toward the Japanese position.

The two nations are currently hammering out the final wording of the agreement. There is a possibility that the terminology will be vague enough to allow both nations to interpret the agreement in a way that is closer to their own national interests.

Japan and Kazakhstan striving for non proliferation and disarmament

November 8, 2016

Japan, Kazakhstan leaders vow unity on nuclear disarmament

<http://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20161108/p2g/00m/0dm/032000c>

TOKYO (Kyodo) -- Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev affirmed in Tokyo Monday their mutual cooperation in striving for nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation, sharing the goal of realizing a world free of nuclear arms.

Nazarbayev's fourth visit to Japan comes 25 years after the closure of the Semipalatinsk nuclear test site in Kazakhstan, where the Soviet Union carried out hundreds of tests over several decades.

"I want to work hand-in-hand with the people of Japan, who have experienced the horrors of nuclear weapons, to create a world without them," Nazarbayev told a joint press conference following the meeting.

"I highly value the close coordination between our countries on the international stage in the fields of the United Nations and on (nuclear) disarmament and nonproliferation," Abe said.

Abe's overtures about nuclear disarmament came after Japan voted against a draft United Nations resolution passed last month urging the start of negotiations in 2017 to outlaw nuclear weapons. The Japanese government cited a lack of specific measures to ensure cooperation between nuclear and non-nuclear powers.

The United States, which maintains a nuclear deterrent, had urged its allies to oppose the resolution. Abe and Nazarbayev released a joint statement affirming their countries' strategic partnership and cooperation on issues facing the international community, eyeing Kazakhstan's nonpermanent membership on the U.N. Security Council beginning next year.

"The joint statement serves as a milestone for our further cooperation on issues important to Japan, including the investment environment and the promotion of Japanese companies' advance into Kazakhstan, maritime security issues and (addressing the actions of) North Korea," Abe said at the press conference.

In the statement, the leaders urged North Korea to refrain from further provocative acts including testing nuclear devices or ballistic missile launches, citing U.N. resolutions prohibiting these acts.

Both leaders noted that next year marks the 25th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between their nations.

"Japan places high importance on its relations with Kazakhstan, which is at the center of Eurasia and possesses abundant energy resources," Abe said at the press conference.

"Kazakhstan is Japan's top trading partner in Central Asia...but trade remains at a level that does not fully utilize our potential," Nazarbayev said.

The Kazakh leader expressed his hope for further economic and trade cooperation in the areas of high-tech manufacturing, agriculture, nuclear power, automobile manufacturing and steelmaking.

Nazarbayev, 76, is scheduled to make a speech in the House of Councillors on Tuesday, according to the upper house secretariat, becoming the first Central Asian leader to do so.

Before ending his four-day trip on Wednesday, he will visit Hiroshima to pay his respects at a memorial to those killed in the 1945 atomic bombing of the western Japan city in World War II.

Mayors for Peace

November 8, 2016

70% of mayors at peace meeting back U.N. resolution on nuke abolition talks

<http://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20161108/p2a/00m/0na/016000c>

Nearly 70 percent of the municipal heads at a domestic general meeting of the nongovernmental organization Mayors for Peace who responded to a Mainichi Shimbun survey said they support a United Nations resolution calling for the start of talks next year to outlaw nuclear weapons.

- **【Related】** Editorial: Is Japan giving up mediator role in nuke ban treaty talks?
- **【Related】** U.N. committee passes draft resolution on nuke abolition talks
- **【Related】** U.S. urges NATO countries to oppose U.N. nuke ban resolution

The U.N. resolution, introduced jointly by Austria, Mexico and several other countries, was approved on Oct. 27 at the First Committee of the U.N. General Assembly, with 123 nations voting for it and 38 against. Japan opposed the measure along with the United States, drawing criticism from peace groups and other parties.

Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga expressed the government's view that the resolution would deepen the divide between nuclear and non-nuclear states, which would make achievement of a world without nuclear weapons a remote prospect.

Akira Kawasaki, an international steering committee member of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, said that by opposing the resolution, Japan was "going from being an A-bombed country to an ally of nuclear states."

The Mainichi Shimbun poll was conducted in line with the Japanese Member Cities' Meeting of Mayors for Peace in the Chiba Prefecture city of Sakura on Nov. 7 and 8. The Mainichi asked 52 mayors who had given advance notice of their attendance whether or not they supported the U.N. resolution, and why. A total of 32 of the 46 mayors who responded said they supported the resolution.

About half of those in favor said they supported the resolution because Japan is the only country to have been attacked with atomic bombs and therefore has its own role to play.

Hiroshima Mayor Kazumi Matsui, president of Mayors for Peace, stated, "In order to steadily advance moves to eliminate nuclear weapons, full implementation of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons is indispensable, along with the conclusion by all countries of a treaty banning nuclear weapons."

Nobuhiro Takahashi, mayor of the Fukushima Prefecture town of Koori, commented, "Fukushima Prefecture is still suffering from radioactive contamination from the nuclear disaster. The use of nuclear materials, which humans cannot control, should be halted immediately."

Two mayors said they opposed the resolution on the grounds that they supported the Japanese government. Twelve did not say whether they opposed or supported the measure.

A representative of the general affairs division of the Shizuoka Prefecture city of Iwata, whose mayor Osamu Watanabe expressed opposition, said that considering the situation in North Korea and other factors, it would cause confusion to ban nuclear weapons immediately. As such, the representative said, it couldn't be helped for the Japanese government to call for proceeding with elimination in stages. The representative said it was an extremely difficult issue.

Sakura Mayor Kazuo Warabi did not say whether he supported or opposed the resolution. He said he took the view that the Japanese government made its decision based on the international situation and the nation's security, then added, "I would like the central government to explain to the public the reasons for its opposition and what future efforts it will make toward the elimination of nuclear weapons."

"Rattling the nuclear cage"

November 4, 2016

Rattling the nuclear cage, and look who is terrified

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2016/11/04/commentary/world-commentary/rattling-nuclear-cage-look-terrified/#.WBzZ9MmDmov>

by Ramesh Thakur

Canberra – The dream of a world freed of the existence of nuclear weapons, and of the resulting existential threat to humanity and to all life on planet Earth, is an inalienable element of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. Revived for a brief shining moment by U.S. President Barack Obama in Prague in 2009, it has gradually faded from view since then as the world witnessed nuclear modernization and upgrades, growth in warhead numbers, continued testing and a rise in geopolitical tensions in several high-risk theaters involving nuclear powers in Eastern Europe, the Middle East, South Asia, the Korean Peninsula and the South China Sea.

But the international community did not give up hope and redoubled efforts to bring the nuclear arms race under control and point the way to nuclear abolition. An ambitious yet sharply practical agenda was outlined by the International Commission on Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (ICNND) co-chaired by former Foreign Ministers Gareth Evans and Yoriko Kawaguchi of Australia and Japan. The current global tensions with their nuclear overtones make any further progress on nuclear arms control much more challenging. But they also heighten the urgency for action.

To realize the NPT vision and remain consistent with the steps advocated by the ICNND, on Oct. 27 the First Committee of the U.N. General Assembly adopted, by the overwhelming vote of 123-38 (with 16 abstentions), Resolution A/C.1/71/L.41, which calls for negotiations on a "legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading toward their total elimination." Two conferences will be convened next

year in New York (March 27 to 31 and June 15 to July 7). The resolution fulfills the 127-nation humanitarian pledge “to stigmatize, prohibit and eliminate nuclear weapons.”

The strengthening international sentiment was evident at the U.N. working group’s disarmament meeting in Geneva in August when Australia angered many countries by insisting on a recorded vote instead of approving a consensus report calling for negotiations on a ban to begin in 2017. The vote was 68-22 to proceed. Strenuous efforts since then to cajole, coax, bribe and bully countries to change their vote in the U.N. General Assembly in October failed spectacularly as no fewer than 57 countries co-sponsored resolution L41. The European Parliament has adopted its own resolution [415-124 (74 abstentions)] calling on member states to participate constructively in the 2017 negotiations.

This historic U.N. decision adds to global efforts to delegitimize nuclear weapons, contain and reverse their spread, and begin the process of first banning and then eliminating them and dismantling their infrastructure. A legal ban will further reinforce the normative boundary between conventional and nuclear weapons, strengthen the norm of nonuse of nuclear weapons, and reaffirm both the nonproliferation and disarmament norms.

All 191 NPT state parties have committed in Article 6 to “pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament.” In 1996 the World Court advised that they have an obligation to bring these negotiations to a conclusion. The Oct. 27 U.N. resolution conforms to this obligation and attempts to give practical expression to it.

Objections to it lack merit and should be seen as a failed tactic to delay abolition indefinitely. The nuclear powers have done their utmost to deny there is any binding legal obligation under the NPT to abolish the bomb within a foreseeable time frame. Having taken that stand in principle and backed it in practice by keeping substantial nuclear weapons stockpiles and modernizing, upgrading and enlarging their arsenals, they have few takers for the argument that the world should not act to fill the existing legal gap.

Japan’s explanation for its “no” vote does not pass the laugh test: “This recommendation of the disarmament community would undermine the progress of effective nuclear disarmament.” Such sophistry adds to the anger and impatience of the others at the lack of concrete progress. Contrary to the nuclear powers’ endless excuses, the international community considers a ban treaty urgent, essential and in current circumstances the only practical way forward for achieving real disarmament.

The nuclear powers parrot one another’s argument that as long as nuclear weapons exist, their stockpiles are needed both to protect national security and to keep the nuclear peace. U.S. umbrella states — allies that shelter under the American nuclear umbrella — echo this in saying that while nuclear weapons exist, they must rely on the protection of U.S. nuclear weapons. But no one is calling for unilateral U.S. nuclear abolition. The entire edifice of the “while nuclear weapons exist” argument crumbles once the goal is synchronized global abolition. The policy challenge changes to managing the transition process so as not to jeopardize any country’s national security nor undermine international security.

Delegitimizing nuclear weapons is central to the longer term goal of abolishing this uniquely inhumane and devastating weapon of mass destruction. The decision to start negotiations is recognition that a ban treaty can be one useful building block for creating the structures necessary to support a world free of nuclear weapons. Chemical weapons were universally prohibited back in 1993 and the relevant convention entered into force in 1997. It is widely hailed as an outstanding success, even though the actual elimination of all chemical weapons has yet to be completed.

Similarly, a legal nuclear ban treaty by itself cannot deliver nuclear disarmament. But it can be a vital element to revive flagging momentum and re-energize efforts to move from a ban to total elimination of nuclear warheads and dismantlement of the nuclear weapons infrastructure. Accordingly, a ban treaty

will be complementary to the disarmament goal of the NPT and provide impetus to efforts toward an eventual Nuclear Weapons Convention that is universal, nondiscriminatory and fully verifiable. A ban treaty would strongly affirm the moral case against the development, acquisition, possession and use of nuclear weapons and for their abolition. Its implementation will require action by those who possess nuclear weapons. Their failure to follow through will be evidence of defying the global norm. A detailed breakdown of the U.N. vote is quite revealing. Four of the five NPT-licit nuclear weapons states voted against the resolution (France, Russia, Britain and the United States) and were joined by Israel as a non-NPT nuclear power. China abstained and so did India and Pakistan. North Korea, remarkably, voted "yes." Of the three countries that have hosted conferences on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons, Austria and Mexico voted for it, but Norway buckled to U.S. pressure and voted against. Of the 177 countries that voted on the resolution, 34 are from Asia and the Pacific region. Of these, 26 voted in support of Resolution L41, four against (Australia, Japan, Federated States of Micronesia, and South Korea), and four abstained (China, India, Pakistan and Vanuatu). Clearly, Australia, Japan and South Korea voted in solidarity with their U.S. nuclear protector and against the overwhelming sentiment of their Asian and Pacific neighbors as well as against global opinion. Being on the wrong side of geography as well as history is not a good look. Their vote might also attract charges of hypocrisy the next time they criticize North Korea's nuclear program.

Ramesh Thakur is director of the Center for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament, Crawford School of Public Policy, Australian National University.

Selling nuke technology to a country who never signed NPT

November 9, 2016

EDITORIAL: Deal with India undermines nuclear nonproliferation

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201611090023.html>

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to arrive in Japan on Nov. 10 for a summit with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe to sign a bilateral deal that will open the way for Japan's nuclear reactor exports to India.

When the two prime ministers reached a basic agreement on this deal in December last year, we expressed our opposition. We now renew our objection and strongly urge the Japanese government to reconsider.

India became a nuclear power without becoming a signatory to the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT). To provide nuclear technology to such a nation flatly contradicts Japan's traditional calls for nuclear disarmament and the elimination of nuclear weapons.

Naturally, objections to the Japan-India treaty have been raised, not only by Hiroshima and Nagasaki atomic bomb survivors but also by citizens of many countries demanding the abolition of nuclear weapons.

The NPT recognizes only five nuclear powers--the United States, Britain, France, China and Russia--while promoting nuclear disarmament. The treaty also guarantees all other nations their right to peaceful use of

nuclear power, such as operating nuclear reactors, provided they refrain from developing nuclear weapons.

In essence, the NPT prevents nations of the world from competing to develop nuclear weapons.

India has remained a nonsignatory to the NPT, objecting to the treaty's unequal treatment of the nuclear powers and the rest of the world. But India has proceeded with nuclear development in the meantime on the pretext that this is for "peaceful purposes."

We must say India has trampled on the very spirit of nuclear nonproliferation.

At one time, the international community moved in the direction of imposing economic sanctions on India but stopped marching in lockstep out of political and economic considerations, lured by India's mammoth lucrative market.

After the United States, France and Russia signed nuclear treaties with India, the sanctions effectively went out the window.

However, since Japanese technology is used in nuclear reactors built by U.S. and French manufacturers, they cannot be exported without a Japan-India treaty. For this reason, the United States and France demanded that Japan conclude a deal with India.

But even then, if Japan is to champion nuclear disarmament and the elimination of nuclear weapons as the world's sole victim of wartime nuclear attacks, surely its relationship with India should be different from that between India and those two nuclear powers.

India's freeze on nuclear tests is merely voluntary, and the country has not even signed the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT).

The Japanese government appears to be hoping to include in the bilateral agreement a clause to the effect that Japan will withdraw cooperation if India conducts a nuclear test.

But is there any guarantee that India will never extract plutonium from spent nuclear fuel from reactors made with Japanese technology and use the plutonium to build nuclear weapons?

When the United Nations adopted a resolution late last month to start negotiations on the Nuclear Weapons Convention, Japan opposed the resolution, saying it could undermine the NPT and the existing nuclear disarmament negotiations.

But the Japan-India nuclear deal may further weaken and even destroy the NPT.

Come to think of it, **is it really appropriate for Japan, which caused the nuclear disaster at Fukushima, to export nuclear reactors to India?**

We can never condone the folly of only seeking immediate commercial gains in selling nuclear reactors to a country that is turning its back on nuclear nonproliferation.

--The Asahi Shimbun, Nov. 9

Has Abe forgotten?

November 12, 2016

EDITORIAL: Japan's nuclear deal with India undermines its key principles

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201611120028.html>

Given the devastation of Hiroshima and Nagasaki caused by the 1945 atomic bombings of these cities, many Japanese harbor a profound desire to see the world rid itself of nuclear weapons.

Yet, the Abe administration is behaving as if it has forgotten Japan's fundamental principles concerning these weapons of mass destruction based on its status as the only nation that has ever sustained nuclear attacks.

The government signed an agreement Nov. 11 that opens the door to nuclear trade with India.

India has developed and now possesses nuclear arms. It has not joined the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT).

Signing a nuclear trade deal with a country that has shunned the treaty designed to stop the spread of nuclear weapons is itself a big mistake. Besides, the agreement contains many questionable and worrisome elements.

The pact allows Japan to provide nuclear technology to India without sufficient guarantee that New Delhi will not conduct nuclear arms tests.

New Delhi has imposed a voluntary moratorium on nuclear tests. The focus of the negotiations between the two countries over the agreement was what kind of action Japan can take in case India resumes testing nuclear arms.

A clause that allows Tokyo to suspend and revoke the agreement if India conducts a nuclear test has not been inserted into the main body of the agreement. Instead, it has been relegated to a related document.

Not only that, a separate clause suggests that when India detonates a nuclear device as a test, Japan will consider whether the test is a countermeasure against actions by countries like archrival Pakistan.

There is even a provision to keep the door open to India's production of highly enriched uranium, a key ingredient for an atomic bomb.

None of the nuclear trade agreements Japan has signed with countries that are parties to the NPT contains such a provision.

This stipulation has been included in the accord, apparently at India's insistence. But it is simply too risky.

The pact doesn't make it clear whether India has to immediately shut down reactors using Japanese technology when it carries out a nuclear test. On the other hand, it says Japan must pay compensation to India when Tokyo decides to withdraw the materials and equipment it has provided for the operation of the nuclear power plants.

These elements of the agreement can only be described as major concessions. Japan clearly has fallen for the allure of India's rapidly growing market, which offers great opportunities to make profits quickly.

The Japanese Foreign Ministry asserts that the agreement is similar to India's deal with the United States, which is the strictest among all the nuclear trade agreements the South Asian power has concluded with other countries.

However, it doesn't reflect Japan's unique position as the only nation to have sustained atomic bombing, nor include any additional measure to prevent nuclear proliferation.

The mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki have repeatedly voiced strong objections to the agreement. They argue that the deal could be a serious impediment to efforts to eliminate nuclear weapons. They also warn that the nuclear materials, technologies and equipment provided by Japan under the deal could be used for the development of nuclear arms.

It's hard to fathom why the Abe administration has turned a deaf ear to their pleas.

India already has a nuclear agreement with Russia as well as the United States and France.

As it has weighed options for introducing nuclear technology, New Delhi has been focusing on the choice between two camps--Japan or the United States and France, where Japanese technology is used in reactors, on the one hand and Russia on the other.

Efforts by the United States, France and Japan to supply nuclear technology to India are driven partly by the geopolitical motive of countering Russia's strategic moves while putting pressure on China, which has been expanding its influence in the region.

Even so, Tokyo strongly resisted pressure from Washington and Paris in striking a nuclear trade agreement with New Delhi.

That's because Tokyo was concerned that such a deal could contribute to emasculating the global nuclear nonproliferation system based on the NPT.

As a country that has first-hand experiences of nuclear devastation, Japan must never take an action that can ruin the global nonproliferation safeguards. We demand that both the ruling and opposition camps engage in exhaustive Diet debate on the agreement.

--The Asahi Shimbun, Nov. 12

Nuke technology should not be exported

November 12, 2016

VOX POPULI: Nuclear disaster surely taught us not to export this technology

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201611120023.html>

The town of Futaba, which co-hosts the crippled Fukushima No. 1 nuclear power plant, used to boast signage promoting nuclear power generation.

One sign proclaimed, "Genshiryoku--Akarui Mirai no Enerugii," which translates literally as "Nuclear power: The energy of a bright future."

This and other signs were removed in the aftermath of the March 2011 nuclear disaster. They were relocated last month to the Fukushima Museum in the city of Aizuwakamatsu, according to the Fukushima edition of The Asahi Shimbun.

The museum is said to be considering an eventual exhibition of these acquisitions, which include a panel bearing the slogan, "Genshiryoku Tadashii Rikai de Yutakana Kurashi" (Proper understanding of nuclear energy enriches life).

These upbeat messages convey the hope, once held by the town of Futaba, that hosting the nuclear power plant will bring prosperity to the community.

But now, the reality gap is all too stark. Completely evacuated in the aftermath of the disaster, Futaba remains a dead town.

Is nuclear power still "the energy of a bright future"?

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe signed a Japan-India nuclear deal on Nov. 11 during his summit with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, opening the way for Japan to export nuclear reactors to India.

This bilateral treaty came about at India's request for Japanese technological cooperation.

In the vicinity of the stricken Fukushima No. 1 nuclear power plant, more than 50,000 citizens are still living as forced evacuees, while work continues on the dismantling of the plant's disabled reactors.

How could any country that let this happen have no qualms about providing its nuclear technology to another country? This is simply beyond comprehension.

While campaigning for India's general election two years ago, Modi stressed that the nation could not hope for industrial or agricultural progress without electricity.

Of India's population of 1.3 billion, about 300 million are still living without electricity. Correcting this power deficiency is obviously an urgent task, but is providing nuclear technology to India the only help that Japan can offer?

With evacuation orders still in effect for Futaba citizens, there is still nothing to indicate that the town will be habitable again.

And we, the Japanese people, know at first hand how difficult it is to rebuild people's lives that were destroyed by a nuclear accident.

--The Asahi Shimbun, Nov. 12

Hibakusha angry about Indian pact

November 12, 2016

Nuclear pact with India draws anger from Hiroshima, Nagasaki hibakusha groups

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2016/11/12/national/nuclear-pact-india-draws-anger-hiroshima-nagasaki-hibakusha-groups/#.WCbRJcmDmos>

JJIJ

The nuclear cooperation agreement concluded between Japan and India on Friday drew anger from people in the atomic-bombed cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

In Tokyo, protesters held a rally in front of the Prime Minister's Office over the pact, which will allow Japan to export nuclear power plants to India, a nonsignatory of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty.

"We hibakusha have called for eliminating nuclear weapons and abandoning nuclear power plants in order to prevent anybody from becoming new victims," Kunihiro Sakuma, 72, chief of a group of hibakusha atomic bomb survivors called Hiroshima Hidankyo, said. "We hope that no nuclear plant will be exported."

"If a nuclear accident occurs, India and neighboring countries will be affected," he said, adding that it is good for Japan not to export any nuclear power plants and for India not to build any such facilities.

The government has held the public in derision, as the pact goes against domestic public opinions that oppose nuclear power plants, said Kazuo Okoshi, 76, head of Hiroshima Hidankyo's secretariat.

It is "disgraceful" that Japan will sell a power plant that uses materials for atomic bombs even though it has not finished dealing with the consequences of the March 2011 meltdown at the Fukushima No. 1 nuclear plant of Tokyo Electric Power Company Holdings Inc., Okoshi said.

In Nagasaki, five hibakusha groups issued a message of protest that the nuclear pact is absolutely intolerable. The message asked why Japan, which has appealed for the abolition of nuclear weapons as the only atomic-bombed nation in the world, signed the agreement with India.

Participants to the Tokyo rally raised a banner saying, “Don’t sell any nuclear plant to India.” Many chanted slogans, such as “We reject the Japan-India pact.”

Renegotiating agreement with US: What next?

November 11, 2016

Nuclear pact’s future could emerge in Abe-Trump talks

Arms remarks to complicate talks on U.S.-Japan deal ending in '18

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2016/11/11/national/politics-diplomacy/nuclear-pacts-future-emerge-abe-trump-talks/#.WCgb8cmDmot>

by Eric Johnston
Staff Writer

OSAKA – When Prime Minister Shinzo Abe meets with U.S. President-elect Donald Trump in New York next week, both men will size up each other and discuss the bilateral relationship and the challenges that lie ahead.

One challenge, whether it’s on the agenda or not, will be the future direction of Japan’s nuclear power program.

With a key 1988 bilateral agreement on the peaceful use of nuclear power due to expire in July 2018, Tokyo and Washington next year will have to begin addressing the question of what, exactly, Japan’s nuclear policy should be.

Renegotiating the treaty is also sure to raise questions about the possibility of Japan using nuclear materials for military purposes, especially as Trump made contradictory statements about the possibility of arming Japan with nuclear weapons.

In an April TV interview, he suggested that Japan might defend itself from North Korea’s nuclear weapons by way of a nuclear arsenal of its own. That comment came a few weeks after another television interview in which he said that it is time to reconsider America’s policy of not allowing Japan to arm itself with nuclear weapons because it is going to happen anyway, and is only a question of time.

Trump later claimed that his opponents were misrepresenting his position. In the weeks before Tuesday’s election, he toned down his rhetoric on nuclear weapons use in general.

Japan’s reply to Trump was that it would continue to maintain its three non-nuclear principles of not manufacturing, possessing, or introducing nuclear weapons.

Now, with the agreement’s extension soon to become an issue in the bilateral relationship, experts are wondering how Trump, when he is president, will handle negotiations.

“I have absolutely no idea what position the Trump administration will adopt. It’s pretty clear their issues team hasn’t thought through things like this,” says James Acton, co-director of the Nuclear Policy Program and senior associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

The U.S. has a long-standing policy against the accumulation of plutonium, but Japan already has about 48 tons stockpiled domestically and in Europe, and how it will consume or disposed of it remains uncertain. "Japan has plans to produce more plutonium in the Rokkasho Reprocessing Plant. Given how few MOX-burning reactors will be operating in the foreseeable future, there is a very serious risk of a large imbalance between plutonium supply and demand," Acton said, using the acronym for mixed uranium-plutonium oxide fuel. "I suspect the U.S. will use the occasion of the agreement's renewal to try and address this problem."

The Rokkasho plant is in Rokkasho, Aomori Prefecture.

Shaun Burnie, a senior nuclear specialist at Greenpeace Germany, says Trump has created an unprecedented degree of uncertainty in Japan about nuclear cooperation in general.

"Regardless of what position the new U.S. administration takes with regard to renewing the 1988 agreement, it is Japan, with its 48 tons of separated plutonium and no peaceful use plans, together with the nations of East Asia, that need to take a leadership role in reducing the risks from nuclear power. That includes terminating Rokkasho," Burnie said.

The 1988 agreement came about after concerns in the U.S. tha

88 agreement came about after concerns in the U.S. that Japan was pursuing a plutonium program that could lead to proliferation issues, and a desire by Japan to make it easier to obtain U.S. approval for nuclear material shipments to Japan from Europe, as required by a previous agreement. In turn, the U.S. got more say in the inspection and security requirements for nuclear facilities in Japan.

The agreement also clearly emphasized it was only for the peaceful uses of power.

Article 8 of the agreement specifically bans the transfer of nuclear material to Japan (or from Japan to the U.S.) for use in nuclear explosive devices, for research specifically on, or development of, nuclear devices, and for military purposes.

"The U.S. does not think that Japan is looking to possess nuclear weapons. But holding so much plutonium, like Japan does, sets a very bad example for other countries and creates great concerns in the U.S. about the problem of nuclear terrorism," wrote Tetsuya Endo, former deputy chairman of the Japan Atomic Energy Commission in a March article for the Tokyo-based Institute for Peace Policies.

November 12, 2016

Nuclear pact with India: How "safe"?

November 15, 2016

A questionable nuclear deal

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2016/11/15/editorials/questionable-nuclear-deal/#.WCr5KMmDmos>

The civilian nuclear cooperation deal signed by Tokyo and New Delhi last week paves the way for Japan to export nuclear power equipment and technology to India, which is a non-signatory to the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty and possesses nuclear weapons. When the pact is submitted for its endorsement, the Diet needs to scrutinize whether it is appropriate from the viewpoint of the international regime

against nuclear proliferation and consistent with the efforts of Japan — the sole country to have experienced nuclear attacks — to promote nonproliferation and the abolition of nuclear arms. In concluding the deal with his visiting Indian counterpart Narendra Modi last week, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe — who is pushing the export of nuclear technology in his efforts for promote overseas infrastructure sale as a key pillar of his growth strategy — emphasized that the deal will lead to India effectively joining the nonproliferation regime. The two countries have concurred that Japan can terminate the accord if India ends its voluntary moratorium on nuclear weapons testing, which has been in place since 2008. Questions persist, however, as to how tight will be the guarantee that nuclear technology and materials made available through the pact will not be diverted to military purposes. In recent years, Japan has concluded a series of civilian nuclear cooperation pacts with such countries as Vietnam, Jordan and Turkey in an effort to export its nuclear power plant technology and equipment. But the latest deal with India carries different ramifications. **It marks a deviation from Japan's emphasis on the NPT regime as the international framework for nuclear nonproliferation and disarmament, which is already threatened by North Korea's repeated nuclear weapons tests.**

India carried out nuclear weapons tests in 1974 and 1998 and is believed to possess at least 100 nuclear warheads. It has refused to join the NPT, which limits possession of nuclear arms to the United States, Britain, France, Russia and China, nor has it signed the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). The international community for years prohibited civilian nuclear cooperation with India, but the U.S. administration of President George W. Bush in 2008 concluded such a pact with New Delhi with an eye on building nuclear power plants in the rapidly growing South Asian economy — a move followed by other countries including Japan.

Japan's negotiations with India on civilian nuclear cooperation began in 2010, but were suspended when Tokyo Electric Power's Fukushima No. 1 plant was hit by triple meltdowns in the March 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake and tsunami. Abe resumed the talks for the pact when Modi's predecessor Manmohan Singh came to Tokyo in 2013, and agreed in principle to the deal when he visited New Delhi last December.

The nuclear pact with India is **part of the Abe administration's broad strategy of beefing up both economic and security relations with India as a counterweight to China's expanding clout in Asia.** There are also views that **it makes sense for Japan and the U.S. in terms of security considerations to extend civilian nuclear cooperation with India, which is counting on nuclear energy to cover an acute power supply shortage, since it will otherwise turn to Russia or China for help in developing its nuclear power industry.** Japanese businesses involved in nuclear power meanwhile see promising markets overseas for export of their technology and equipment since the Fukushima disaster made it difficult for utilities to build new nuclear plants in Japan and the restart of idled plants remains slow. These strategic and business considerations were prioritized as Tokyo pushed for the nuclear deal, which also authorizes India to reprocess spent nuclear fuel to extract plutonium. **Japan is reported to have compromised on its earlier demand that the pact include an explicit provision that cooperation would be halted if India resumed nuclear weapons tests.** The final accord merely states that each of the parties can terminate the cooperate by notifying the other one year in advance. It is only stipulated in a separate document exchanged along with the accord that India's 2008 nuclear test moratorium serves as the basis of civilian nuclear cooperation and that the Japanese government can initiate a process to terminate the pact if it ends. The accord says the cooperation will be restricted to peaceful purposes — and that nuclear materials and technology provided through the pact must not be diverted to other purposes. Doubts persist that these provisions will guarantee that India will not resume nuclear weapons testing or divert plutonium

extracted by reprocessing spent fuel to use in nuclear arms. These and other questions over the pact must be fully addressed when it comes up for deliberations in the Diet.

Hiroshima mayor, UN and nuclear disarmament

November 24, 2016

Hiroshima mayor, Kishida on nuclear weapons ban

http://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20161124_19/

The mayor of the atomic-bombed city of Hiroshima has urged the Japanese government to take a leadership role in discussions on a UN treaty to ban nuclear weapons.

A UN General Assembly committee in October approved a resolution calling for talks on a legally binding treaty. Japan voted against the resolution.

Hiroshima Mayor Kazumi Matsui handed a letter of appeal to Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida on Thursday. Matsui also heads the Mayors for Peace, an international organization of cities working to abolish nuclear weapons.

Matsui said it was extremely regrettable that Japan opposed the talks. He said it runs counter to the earnest wishes of the atomic bomb survivors.

Kishida said an agreement between nuclear and non-nuclear weapons states is essential for the abolition of atomic arms.

He said Japan has been consistent in its position to serve as a bridge between the two sides.

Kishida said Japan will take part in treaty negotiations expected to start in March and continue to seek a world free of nuclear weapons.

The Hiroshima mayor spoke to reporters after the meeting. He said that Japan is the home of the only atomic-bombed cities, Hiroshima and Nagasaki. He said for that reason Japan is in a unique position to push for a nuclear-free world.

He said he wants the Japanese government to firmly resolve to guide the different interests through this difficult situation.

November 23, 2016

Ban wants divide over nuclear disarmament narrowed

http://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20161123_18/

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has underscored the need for dialogue to narrow the gap between nuclear and non-nuclear nations over disarmament.

Ban delivered a lecture on the outlook for nuclear disarmament in New York on Tuesday.

Last month, a UN General Assembly committee approved a resolution calling for negotiations to start in March on the establishment of a legally binding nuclear weapons ban treaty. It was adopted by a majority vote, over the opposition of nuclear powers, including the United States.

Ban expressed concern about the deep differences over how to proceed with disarmament.

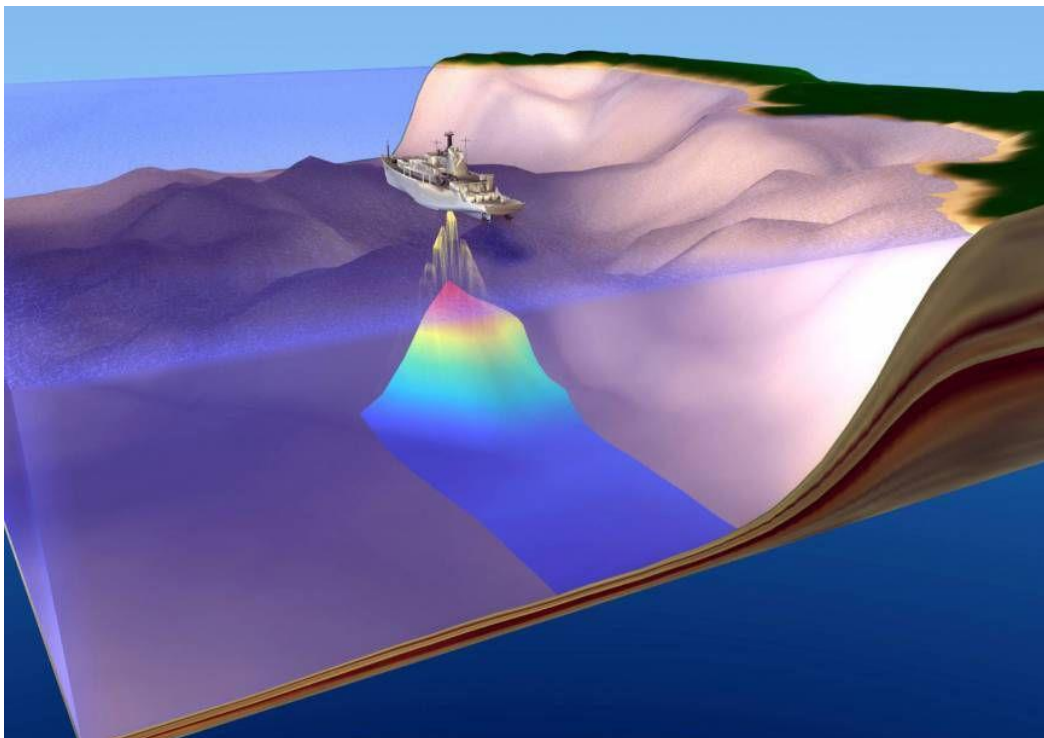
He stressed that countries should work to narrow those differences and find common ground.

Ban also voiced hope that the next US administration will stick to a deal reached by Iran and 6 world powers last year.

The 2 sides agreed Tehran would curb its nuclear development in return for the lifting of economic sanctions. US President-elect Donald Trump opposes the accord.

Ban ends his second 5-year term as UN chief at the end of December.

Undersea arm race



December 20, 2016

This illustration depicts the underwater mapping capability of the U.S. Navy's USNS Bowditch and other ships of her class. | U.S. NAVY

Undersea arms race: Seizure of U.S. drone shines spotlight on China's nuclear submarine strategy

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2016/12/20/asia-pacific/undersea-arms-race-seizure-u-s-drone-shines-spotlight-chinas-nuclear-submarine-strategy/#.WFkr932Dmic>

by Jesse Johnson

Staff Writer

With its controversial seizure and return of a U.S. underwater drone, Beijing may have inadvertently thrust into the spotlight one of the main motivations behind its ramped-up moves in the South China Sea: the quest to create a safe-haven for its sea-based nuclear deterrent.

Submarines, in particular ballistic missile subs, have long figured prominently in China's desire to match the capabilities and prestige of other major nuclear powers. Slowly but surely, experts say, Beijing has made progress on this front, building a formidable program that began very early in the ruling Communist Party's history.

But securing the credibility of its overall nuclear deterrent has been a challenge.

"In particular, experts worry that growing U.S. missile defense, conventional precision strike, and space-based surveillance capability together allow for sophisticated preemptive attacks that pose a significant threat to China's land-based nuclear forces," Tong Zhao, a fellow at the Carnegie-Tsinghua Center for Global Policy, wrote in a June report on China's sea-based nuclear deterrent.

Prompted by these concerns, China has looked to its nuclear missile submarine program — and all that is associated with it — amid an intensifying rivalry with the United States, pulling out all stops in a bid to establish credible nuclear retaliation capabilities.

The battleground for this competition? Beneath the waves in the South China Sea.

In recent years, the strategic waterway has been lumped in with other Chinese "core interests," a set of critical issues on which there is very little room, if any, for negotiation.

Observers say Chinese strategists are interested in an open ocean patrol strategy, and many reportedly believe that to be the ultimate goal of China's nuclear missile fleet. First, however, it must secure the South China Sea as a sort of staging ground or bastion for extended operations.

"Given the noise level of the existing Chinese SSBNs (nuclear ballistic missile submarines), the bastion strategy seems to offer a better near-term solution," Zhao wrote in his report, noting that known Chinese subs remain far noisier than their American counterparts.

According to Zhao, the South China Sea appears to be the best bet for China's subs, given its depth and other environmental factors.

Even though a large southern portion of the South China Sea is rather shallow — under 100 meters (328 feet) in depth — in much of the area roughly inside China's "nine-dash line" territorial claim, the continental shelf drops to a deep basin of around 4,000 meters, offering better cover for submarines. Such a submarine bastion could be a first step toward giving Beijing the ability to break out into the Western Pacific and beyond, putting its subs — and their nuclear missiles — within range of the continental United States.

“Given the fact that the current Chinese submarine-launched ballistic missile — the JL-2 — does not have a range long enough to reach the continental United States from China’s coastal waters, Chinese SSBNs have incentives to practice breaking through the ‘first island chain’ and into the West Pacific,” Zhao told The Japan Times in an interview. The first island chain refers to a line stretching from Japan and Taiwan that China says has been used by the United States to contain it since the Cold War.

But Beijing faces huge obstacles if it seeks to dominate the South China Sea, part of what some analysts have termed a long-term project to create a virtual “Chinese lake.”

China has reclaimed 3,200 acres (1,280 hectares) of land on seven features it occupies in the disputed waters, giving it what the Pentagon says are long-term “civil-military” outposts from which it can project power.

While Zhao disagrees that Beijing is seeking to turn the South China Sea into its own “lake,” he said that China does — for the purpose of enhancing the survivability of its sea-based nuclear deterrent — have interests in strengthening its capability to detect and monitor enemy anti-submarine warfare platforms in the region.

“Some of the China-controlled islands may be helpful for providing logistical support and protection for Chinese SSBNs patrolling in nearby waters. In other words, helping protect Chinese SSBNs may be part of Chinese motivations behind the land reclamation projects,” Zhao said, adding that the projects were primarily driven by China’s desire to reinforce its territorial claims in the South China Sea.

Regardless, perhaps the biggest obstacle for Beijing is trade and location: The strategic waterway is home to some of the busiest international commercial shipping lanes in the world and is surrounded by other nations, including fellow claimants to the waters, making encounters with numerous navies inevitable.

For China, though, the U.S. Navy’s presence in the waterway — and its surveillance activities there — have been perhaps the most implacable threat to control of the waters, de facto or otherwise.

These concerns were highlighted Thursday, when the Chinese Navy seized a U.S. unmanned underwater vehicle (UUV) in international waters in the South China Sea, prompting a formal diplomatic protest and a demand for its return. The UUV was returned Tuesday.

« The US cannot hide its real agenda by downplaying recent events,” the state-run People’s Daily newspaper said in an editorial Monday written by Hua Yiwen, who it described as an international affairs expert. “The unmanned drone was just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to U.S. military actions against China. The U.S. has been developing UUVs for a long time, treating them as a ‘power enhancer’ for its military and a crucial part of its weapons system.”

While Thursday’s seizure was rare in that it was made public, both China and the U.S. have been busy bolstering their surveillance operations in the area in recent years, including the use of UUVs.

“This is not the first time that we seized a U.S. underwater drone in the South China Sea, but the one we seized on Thursday is new and more advanced than before and might carry valuable information just gathered in the South China Sea,” the state-run Global Times newspaper quoted Li Jie, a Beijing-based naval expert, as saying Sunday.

“This is why the U.S. was so nervous and tried to use the media to hype it up this time while it had remained silent before,” the paper quoted Li as saying. “The U.S. was aware that such spying activity is inappropriate.”

The United States “has shown considerable interest in using new technologies like unmanned underwater drones to track and trail Chinese SSBNs,” the Carnegie-Tsinghua Center’s Zhao said in his report, noting U.S. government-sponsored studies about how to deploy such drones near Chinese submarine bases to detect the vessels as they leave and return to port.

In April, U.S. Defense Secretary Ash Carter announced that Washington would invest more than \$8 billion just next year in undersea capabilities “to ensure ours is the most lethal and most advanced undersea and anti-submarine force in the world.”

“That includes new undersea drones — in multiple sizes and diverse payloads — that can, importantly, operate in shallow waters where manned submarines can’t,” Carter said.

China, for its part, has reportedly hustled to match the U.S. technological prowess under the waves.

In an example of this, top Chinese researchers gathered Saturday — just two days after the U.S. drone’s seizure — for what was billed as the nation’s first underwater drone symposium.

This came after Chinese researchers carried out the first test of an underwater glider drone that could challenge the record for the deepest dive, a mark held by a vessel now in use by the U.S. Navy, the South China Morning Post reported in September.

The tests of the Haiyi-7000 underwater glider drone have reportedly piqued the interest of the Chinese military, the paper said.

The Pentagon has said the seized drone, reportedly a Teledyne-Webb Slocum G2 glider with significant military applications, used commercially available technology that sold for about \$150,000.

Experts, however, have painted a more nuanced picture.

According to Malcolm Davis, a senior analyst at the Australian Strategic Policy Institute in Canberra, the type of drone that was taken, which resembles an aircraft that flies underwater, is used for oceanographic research to map the underwater terrain and conditions such as temperature, acoustic activity and salinity.

“That’s very useful for the U.S. to sort of map the underwater battle space that China would be deploying submarines into,” Davis said.

But while understanding how the glider concept works is accessible, he added, “it is complex in its execution.”

“In terms of the concept, if you put wings on a drone, you can use the current to glide,” he said. “But exactly how you do that and the technology within that drone, in terms of sensors and guidance, is complex and quite classified.”

While it remains unknown precisely how crucial a part underwater drones currently play in the waters of the South China Sea, the rapid pace of technological breakthroughs means continued deployments are unlikely to abate anytime soon.

“Drones already are and will continue to play a more important role in underwater ‘cat-and-mouse’ games,” Zhao told The Japan Times. “This trend will only increase as autonomous technologies improve. U.S. military doctrines have openly called for prioritizing the deployment of unmanned underwater vessels in the Asia-Pacific region, presumably to counter the perceived threat from China.”

And while the drone seized last week was likely only used for collecting hydrological data that is useful for anti-submarine operations, “U.S. intentions to use underwater drones in the future to actively track and trail Chinese submarines are no secret,” Zhao added.

“Under these conditions, China will for sure develop similar technologies of its own,” Zhao said. “It is high time for the international community to sit down and discuss possible rules of the road for employing unmanned maritime military systems for the sake of avoiding future incidents.”

Join the Hibakusha Appeal to ban nuclear weapons



Hibakusha Petition

Join the Hibakusha Appeal for a Nuclear Ban Treaty

<http://www.ippnw.eu/en/abolition-of-nuclear-weapons/artikel/3963ae32399965a431b032ea680d6cb1/join-the-hibakusha-appeal-for-a-nucl.html>

“So that the people from future generations will not have to experience hell on earth, we want to realize a world free of nuclear weapons while we are still alive.”

71 years have passed since the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. This is the call of the survivors, known as Hibakusha.

Although their average age is now more than 80 years old, the Hibakusha have launched a signature campaign calling for an international treaty to ban and eliminate nuclear weapons, in the hope that no one will ever have to suffer as they have. They plan to continue to collect signatures until 2020 or until a nuclear ban treaty is concluded.

The first batch of 564,240 signatures collected in August-September 2016 was submitted on October 6 to the Chair of the United Nations General Assembly's First Committee (on disarmament). New signatures will be submitted annually.

On October 27, 2016 at that same First Committee, the UN adopted a landmark resolution to launch negotiations in 2017 on a treaty outlawing nuclear weapons, with 123 countries voting in favour.

Join your voice with those of the Hibakusha to say "Never Again."

Sign the petition for a new treaty to ban nuclear weapons here.

... back[Sign the petition here] [Read about the appeal on hibakusha-appeal.net]

UN General Assembly's historic resolution

December 23, 2016

UN General Assembly approves historic resolution

from the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), December 23, 2016

<http://www.icanw.org/campaign-news/un-general-assembly-approves-historic-resolution/>

The United Nations General Assembly today approved a historic resolution to launch **negotiations in 2017 on a treaty prohibiting nuclear weapons**. The vote follows a decision on 27 October by the General Assembly's First Committee – which deals with disarmament and international security matters – to begin work on the new treaty despite fervent opposition from some nuclear-armed nations.

The resolution was adopted by a large majority, with **113** UN member states voting in favour, **35** voting against and **13** abstaining. Support was strongest among the nations of Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean, Southeast Asia and the Pacific. **A cross-regional group comprising Austria, Brazil, Ireland, Mexico, Nigeria and South Africa initiated the resolution and are likely to lead next year's negotiations.**

At a UN budget committee meeting earlier this week, the United States attracted the ire of other nations when it objected to a funding request for the planned four weeks of negotiations on the treaty, to be held at UN headquarters in New York. But under intense pressure from supporters of nuclear disarmament, it eventually withdrew its objection, and the committee authorized the request.

In a leaked document distributed to all NATO members in October ahead of the First Committee decision, the United States – which possesses some 7,000 nuclear weapons – urged its allies to oppose the resolution and to boycott the negotiations, fearing that the treaty would erode the perception that nuclear weapons are legitimate for certain nations and make it more difficult for NATO to engage in nuclear war planning.

A number of close US allies that voted against the resolution or abstained have indicated their intention to participate in the negotiations anyway, in order to help shape the treaty. For example, the Netherlands, which hosts US nuclear weapons on its territory and abstained from voting, has confirmed that it will take part, and Japan's foreign minister, despite opposing the resolution, wants his country to attend.

The International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) is urging all nations to take part. "Every nation has an interest in ensuring that nuclear weapons are never used again, which can only be guaranteed through their complete elimination. We are calling on all governments to join next year's negotiations and work to achieve a strong and effective treaty," said Beatrice Fihn, executive director of ICAN.

ICAN stressed that the negotiations should proceed whether or not nuclear-armed nations agree to participate. "As a matter of principle, weapons that are indiscriminate in nature and are intended to cause

catastrophic humanitarian harm should be prohibited under international law. This new treaty will place nuclear weapons on the same legal footing as other weapons of mass destruction,” said Fihn.

“We believe that, through its normative force, the nuclear weapon ban treaty will affect the behaviour of nuclear-armed nations even if they refuse to join it. It will also affect the behaviour of many of their allies that currently claim protection from nuclear weapons, including those in Europe that host nuclear weapons on their territory. It will contribute significantly towards achieving a nuclear-weapon-free world.”

The negotiations will be divided into two sessions, from 27 to 31 March and from 15 June to 7 July. ICAN plans to send a large delegation of campaigners to both sessions. The campaign is urging governments to make every effort to conclude the treaty by the end of the four weeks of negotiations, noting that much preparatory work has already been done, including by a UN working group that met in Geneva this year.

The treaty is likely to include provisions similar to those found in existing treaties banning biological weapons, chemical weapons, anti-personnel landmines and cluster munitions. These include prohibitions on use, development, production, acquisition, stockpiling, retention and transfer, as well as assistance, encouragement or inducement of anyone to engage in any of these prohibited activities.

Multilateral negotiations for nuclear disarmament have been deadlocked for two decades, as all nine nuclear-armed nations have invested heavily in upgrades to their nuclear forces. Alternative proposals for advancing a nuclear-weapon-free world have failed to gain traction or produce results. A majority of UN member states view the ban treaty approach as the most viable and promising pathway forward.

So who is starting an arms race?

Another parting Christmas gift from the Nobel Peace Prize winner. - (Steven Starr)

December 24, 2016

While Blaming Trump For "Arms Race", Obama Signs Momentous "Star Wars II" Defense Bill

by Tyler Durden, Zero Hedge, December 24, 2016

<http://www.zerohedge.com/news/2016-12-24/while-blaming-trump-arms-race-obama-signs-momentous-star-wars-ii-defense-bill>

As politicians and mainstream media blast Trump's apparently incendiary tweet regarding nuclear arms, none other than President **Obama just signed legislation** that, by striking a single word from longstanding US nuclear defence policy, could **heighten tensions with Russia and China and launch the country on an expensive effort to build space-based defense systems.**

Oh the irony... Following Trump's tweet...

The United States must greatly strengthen and expand its nuclear capability

until such time as the world comes to its senses regarding nukes

— **Donald J. Trump (@realDonaldTrump)** December 22, 2016

The mainstream media has lambasted the president-elect for "endangering the world" and "starting another nuclear arms race." However, ***that same mainstream media appears mute in their response to what President Obama just did...***

The National Defence Authorisation Act, a year-end policy bill encompassing virtually every aspect of the US military, **contained two provisions with potentially momentous consequences.** As AP reports, One **struck the word "limited" from language describing the mission of the country's homeland missile defence system.** The system is said to be designed to thwart a small-scale attack by a non-superpower such as North Korea or Iran.

A related provision calls for the Pentagon to start "research, development, test and evaluation" of space-based systems for missile defence.

Together, the provisions signal that the US will seek to use advanced technology to defeat both small-scale and large-scale nuclear attacks.

That could unsettle the decades-old balance of power among the major nuclear states.

Huge bipartisan majorities in both houses of Congress approved the policy changes over the past month, with virtually no public debate.

Although the White House had earlier criticised the changes, it stopped short of threatening a veto. **On Friday, Obama signed the legislation.**

Leading defence scientists said the idea that a space-based system could provide security against nuclear attack is a fantasy...

"It defies the laws of physics and is not based on science of any kind," said L. David Montague, a retired president of missile systems for Lockheed and co-chair of a National Academy of Sciences panel that studied missile defence technologies at the request of Congress.

"Even if we darken the sky with hundreds or thousands of satellites and interceptors, there's no way to ensure against a dedicated attack," Montague said in an interview. ***"So it's an opportunity to waste a prodigious amount of money."***

He called the provisions passed by Congress **"insanity, pure and simple."**

Republican Congressman Trent Franks, who introduced and shepherded the policy changes in the House, said he drew inspiration from former president Ronald Reagan's Strategic Defence Initiative of the 1980s, which was intended to use lasers and other space-based weaponry to render nuclear weapons "impotent and obsolete." **Known as "Star Wars", the initiative cost taxpayers US\$30 billion, but no system was ever deployed.**

Philip E. Coyle III, a former assistant secretary of defence who headed the Pentagon office responsible for testing and evaluating weapon systems, **described the idea of a space-based nuclear shield as "a sham".**

“To do this would cost just gazillions and gazillions,” Coyle said. “The technology isn’t at hand – nor is the money. It’s unfortunate from my point of view that the Congress doesn’t see that.”

He added: “Both Russia and China will use it as an excuse to do something that they want to do.”

Finally, when asked whether the country could afford it, Franks replied: **“What is national security worth? It’s priceless.”**

Priceless indeed.

So who is “starting an arms race? _ _ _

Posted by: Steven Starr <nuclearstarr@gmail.com>

Should Japan develop its own nuclear weapons?



December 25, 2016

Will Trump’s foreign policy push Japan to go nuclear?

by Kevin Rafferty

Special To The Japan Times

OSAKA – The election of Donald Trump as U.S. president threw a potential bombshell into diplomatic, political and military relations all over the globe. His subsequent unpredictable interventions have raised the basic question in every capital in the world: Can we trust this guy?

This is especially so for Japan, for which the U.S. alliance has been the foundation of its security and diplomatic policy since the war. Trump’s mercurial unpredictability raises the hitherto unthinkable question — **if Japan cannot rely on Trump’s U.S., should it develop its own nuclear weapons?**

The president-elect's lack of foreign policy experience, except as business deal-maker building his eponymous empire, is one concern; more worrying is his tendency to shoot his mouth off with a rambling instant opinion, and then later to deny he said it.

Specifically on Japan and nuclear weapons, he told Chris Wallace of Fox News in April: "So, North Korea has nukes. Japan has a problem with that. I mean, they have a big problem with that. Maybe they would in fact be better off if they defend themselves from North Korea." Wallace intervened: "With nukes?" he asked. "Including with nukes, yes, including with nukes," Trump replied.

CNN's Wolf Blitzer asked whether Trump was ready to let Japan and South Korea become nuclear powers. He responded: "I am prepared to — if they're not going to take care of us properly, we cannot afford to be the military and the police for the world."

But in October Trump called Hillary Clinton "a liar" when she accused him of suggesting that Japan should get nuclear weapons to defend itself.

Supporters claimed that when he was elected, Trump would calm down and become, well, presidential. In the hour of victory, he was magnanimous, talking of the need to bind the wounds of a divided America.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe was the first foreign leader to pay court at the golden Trump Tower.

Afterwards, Abe said, according to the official translation: "In any case, our alliance will not function without trust. I came away convinced that President-elect Trump is a leader who can be trusted." In Japanese, Abe was more nuanced. Noticeably, the ever-voluble Trump did not tweet Abe's praises back. Trump then used YouTube to announce his plans for his first 100 days, promising that on day one he would tear up the Trans-Pacific Partnership trade agreement. This was a kick in the teeth for Abe, who backed the TPP as a keystone to boost Japan's economic reforms.

The TPP was President Barack Obama's plan to allow the United States, rather than China, to set the rules of global trade. Rightly criticized for pandering to big corporations, it promised the U.S. estimated annual gains of \$57 billion to \$131 billion.

Trump resumed his tweets to pronounce policies and announce his Cabinet of billionaires, multimillionaires, retired generals and people dedicated to remove restrictions on education, energy, environment and labor protection, all far removed from blue-collar Middle America, which voted him to power. His logic is that they are all successful deal-makers who will lend their knowledge and expertise to do great deals to make America great again, in his view.

Most challenging is the Trumpeting in a China shop, with the president-elect happy to shatter diplomatic protocols. The carefully planned "congratulatory" telephone call from Tsai Ing-wen, whom Trump termed "the president of Taiwan," was only a first step. China's outraged nationalist Global Times urged that China should settle the question of one China by invading and seizing Taiwan.

But perhaps it is not China that should be worried — since Trump surely has a great deal for Beijing. He has good family business reasons: His buildings benefited from cheap Chinese steel in their construction, and many of daughter Ivanka's fashion goods are made in China.

Instead, Taiwan, along with Japan, and Estonia, Ukraine and Germany, among others, should be trembling at the prospect of Trump's volcanic eruption on the world. Some respected commentators predict that Trump's passion for deal-making, starting with his soulmate Russian President Vladimir Putin and going on to Putin's new chum Chinese President Xi Jinping, will produce a new triumvirate to rule the world, the U.S., Russia and China (though triumvirates have historically come unstuck because of squabbling among greedy partners).

Trump's determination to remake America's world leaves Japan vulnerable. He complained that the U.S. is paying to protect Japan, forgetting that since Tokyo pays most of the bills. America is getting cheap

forward bases for any military engagement in Asia. That may not matter if Trump no longer wants America to play world policeman.

Without the U.S. alliance, Japan lacks friends in dangerous waters. News that China has placed military anti-aircraft and anti-missiles systems on all of the artificial islands it has built in the South China Sea adds to unease that Beijing is determined to control all the seas within its “nine-dash line.” Long-standing Southeast Asian friends of the U.S., notably the Philippines and Malaysia, have begun to lean toward China, recognizing the power of the economic and political winds.

Most defense analysts believe that Japan could give China a bloody nose in any immediate conflict, but China’s increases in military spending are threatening Japan’s qualitative and quantitative edge. Some analysts suggest that Japan should double spending on the Self-Defense Forces to 2 percent of GDP, which would catapult Japan to the world’s third-biggest military spender — though still only half of China’s spending.

Doubts whether Japan’s already constrained budget could tolerate such an increase are fueling dark debate about a cheaper option of going nuclear. It has not reached the public sphere because of deep distrust even of civilian nuclear power.

Japan noticeably refused to support the recent U.N. resolution calling for outlawing of nuclear weapons, and has sufficient plutonium to make thousands of weapons. U.S. Vice President Joe Biden told Xi this year that Japan could make nuclear weapons “virtually overnight.” Six months would be a realistic estimate. Japan is dancing with the devil in thinking of an arms race or the nuclear option to make up for lack of Trump’s support. Memories of firebombed Tokyo, as well as Hiroshima and Nagasaki, should be revived. War rarely solves anything, as can be seen in the United Nations’ description of Aleppo as a “complete meltdown of humanity” achieved by Syrian and Russian bombing, on which compulsive tweeter Trump has been silent.

The destructive power of today’s weapons is terrible; and the nuclear option can only lead to nuclear winter and the death of planet Earth. Japan’s role — on behalf of all humanity — as the first nuclear victim, should be to pioneer innovative peaceful ways to settle disputes and make friendships with its neighbors. Losing the umbrella of U.S. protection makes the task more pressing.

Sadly, Abe is a problematic leader for such a quest because of his ultra-reverence for his grandfather, Nobusuke Kishi, one of Japan’s war leaders, who taught him politics. Abe has to make a giant leap in imagination to go from the mid-20th century of Kishi to respond to the international demands of the 21st and even 22nd century, if Japan and mankind are to survive that long.

Kevin Rafferty is a journalist specializing in Asia and a former professor at Osaka University.

Japan and the UN nuclear arms ban

December 24, 2016

Japan: UN nuclear arms ban resolution divisive

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20161224_24/

Japan says the UN General Assembly resolution that would ban nuclear weapons could further deepen a rift between nuclear and non-nuclear states.

Japan's foreign ministry told NHK that the resolution adopted on Friday is not in line with the country's position that both sides need to work together and take concrete and practical actions to create a world without nuclear arms.

The ministry says the country also needs to take into account the challenging security environment, including North Korea's repeated nuclear tests.

The government will further discuss whether to take part in the negotiations on the treaty which are scheduled to start next March.

Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida has repeatedly said Japan would like to take part in the discussions.

He says he wants to call for cooperation between both nuclear and non-nuclear states in order to promote a stable process for nuclear disarmament.

The aim should be a world without nuclear weapons

December 27, 2016

Editorial: U.N. arms reduction talks should aim for world without nuclear weapons

<http://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20161227/p2a/00m/0na/013000c>

Two major trends -- nuclear disarmament and nuclear arms expansion -- are clashing with each other. It remains to be seen whether the ideal of a "world without nuclear weapons," which U.S. President Barack Obama advocates, will be maintained after he steps down in January 2017.

- **【Related】** U.N. General Assembly backs resolution on nuke abolition talks

As a positive move toward nuclear disarmament, the U.N. General Assembly voted to adopt a resolution at a session on Dec. 23, calling for the beginning of specific consultations in March next year toward the establishment of a Nuclear Weapons Convention (NWC).

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which came into force in 1970, allows the United States, Britain, France, China and Russia to possess nuclear arms. These five nuclear powers are reluctant to carry out nuclear arms reductions provided for by the treaty. As such, the NWC is aimed at outlawing nuclear weapons and ridding the world of such arms.

A total of 113 countries supported the draft resolution, led by non-nuclear powers, while 35 countries including the United States, Britain, France and Russia voted against the pact. Thirteen countries including

China abstained. The fact that Japan, the only atomic-bombed country, voted against the resolution drew particular attention.

On Dec. 22, the day before the resolution was adopted, Russian President Vladimir Putin announced that the country will upgrade its nuclear force to counter the United States' missile defense program. U.S. President-elect Donald Trump also said the United States will "greatly strengthen and expand" its nuclear capability "until such time as the world comes to its senses regarding nukes."

The declarations by the United States and Russia, which possess 90 percent of nuclear weapons in the world, that both will expand their nuclear capabilities, appear as if they were challenging the U.N. resolution.

The NWC was discussed at a U.N. conference on disarmament issues held in Nagasaki in mid-December and attended by representatives from about 20 countries including the United States and Russia. With regard to the NWC, a high-ranking official of the U.S. State Department said the United States is responsible for ensuring the security of its allies as well as the entire international community through its nuclear umbrella, and voiced stiff opposition to outlawing nuclear arms.

Tokyo sided with Washington. A senior Foreign Ministry official said Japan cannot support any effort toward nuclear disarmament that does not involve nuclear powers, noting that nuclear powers' knowledge is necessary to dismantle nuclear weapons.

Representatives of Iran and other countries underscored the need to establish a convention to ban nuclear arms on the grounds that allowing only nuclear powers to take the initiative in global security would run counter to the spirit of the United Nations.

It is understandable to a certain extent that Japan shows consideration to the United States that provides a nuclear umbrella to Japan and other allies. However, Japan should keep in mind that nuclear arms reductions would be more difficult under a Trump administration unless Japan makes strong assertions on nuclear disarmament as a mediator between nuclear powers and non-nuclear powers.

Trump appears to be considering using the U.S. nuclear capability to overwhelm North Korea and other countries developing nuclear arms. However, **the president-elect should remember that the U.S.-Soviet nuclear arms race during the Cold War never brought security to the world but rather contributed to nuclear proliferation.**

Both Trump and Putin should keep in mind that continuing and promoting the pursuit of a "world without nuclear weapons" is the only way to free the world from the threat of nuclear weapons.

Another parting Christmas gift from the Nobel Peace Prize winner. - (Steven Starr)

Urging Trump on nuclear disarmament

January 5, 2017

A-bomb survivor, others press Trump on nuclear disarmament

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2017/01/05/national/bomb-survivor-others-press-trump-nuclear-disarmament/#.WG4aAH2Dmos>

Kyodo

NEW YORK – A Japanese atomic bomb survivor along with anti-war activists and scholars from around the globe urged U.S. President-elect Donald Trump on Wednesday to recognize the threat of nuclear weapons and pursue disarmament.

They made the pitch to Trump, who will assume office on Jan. 20, in an open letter released by the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation based in Santa Barbara, California.

The signatories to the letter, dated Tuesday, include Setsuko Thurlow, a survivor of the U.S. atomic bombing of Hiroshima on Aug. 6, 1945, film director Oliver Stone and linguist Noam Chomsky.

“As president of the United States, you will have the grave responsibility of assuring that nuclear weapons are not overtly threatening or used during your term of office,” the letter said.

“The most certain way to fulfill this responsibility is to negotiate with the other possessors of nuclear weapons for their total elimination,” it added.

The letter expressed strong concerns that Trump has suggested Japan and South Korea may need to go nuclear or threatened to dismantle a global deal aimed at curbing Iran’s nuclear program.

“It is terrifying to think of Donald Trump with the codes to launch the U.S. nuclear arsenal,” said David Krieger, president of the foundation.

“The mix of Trump and nuclear weapons is a formula for making his term in office the most dangerous period in human history,” he said.

Japan should serve as a bridge

January 6, 2016

EDITORIAL: Progress toward a nuclear-free world must keep moving forward

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201701060034.html>

Big changes are in store.

The first is the imminent departure of Barack Obama as president of the United States. Eight years ago, Obama, in a landmark speech in Prague, declared “America’s commitment to seek the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons.” He will leave office on Jan. 20.

Obama’s successor, who also will control America’s launch codes for nuclear weapons, is Donald Trump. Recently, the president-elect posted a tweet that said, “The United States must greatly strengthen and expand its nuclear capability.”

His tweet alarmed many people, as it signaled a radical departure from the Obama administration’s nuclear arms policy.

But there must be no turning back on the path toward “a world without nuclear weapons.”

This year will mark the start of multinational negotiations for a treaty to ban nuclear arsenals. This opportunity should be taken to create a powerful global movement toward a future free from nuclear weapons. Japan should play a prominent role in promoting this concept.

OBAMA'S LEGACY

There is no disputing the efforts Obama has made to tackle the threat posed by nuclear arsenals.

He used his leadership to organize four nuclear security summits to discuss how to thwart terrorist attacks involving nuclear materials. These conferences contributed significantly to efforts to exert stricter

management of nuclear substances as they helped him and other world leaders to share a deeper understanding of the problem.

In 2015, Obama helped work out an agreement between Iran and leading world powers on curtailing Tehran's nuclear development program, which had been a key international security issue for many years. Last year, Obama became the first sitting U.S. president to visit Hiroshima, which in 1945 became the first city to be leveled by atomic bombing.

None of these achievements was possible without Obama's strong personal commitment to the cause. Saying this, however, doesn't necessarily mean that Obama's performance measured up to the high initial expectations that the international community had of him.

In 2010, the Obama administration signed a New START (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty) deal with Russia to limit the number of deployed strategic nuclear warheads in the two countries to 1,550.

As Washington's relationship with Moscow has soured because of Russia's involvement in the Ukraine crisis, however, there is no prospect for a further reduction in the two countries' nuclear arsenals.

The Obama administration adopted what is called a "strategic patience" strategy in dealing with North Korea's nuclear arms program. The strategy means the United States will not agree to any negotiation with Pyongyang until it takes specific steps toward denuclearization.

But North Korea has conducted four nuclear tests in defiance of the Obama administration's warnings.

Obama also carefully weighed the idea of making a declaration of "no first use," or a U.S. pledge not to use nuclear weapons unless first attacked with nuclear weapons. It is a great shame that Obama didn't act on it.

INHUMANE NATURE OF NUCLEAR ARMS

Last month, Trump posted a tweet saying that "the United States must greatly strengthen and expand its nuclear capability until such time as the world comes to its senses regarding nukes." It was seen as a reaction to Russian President Vladimir Putin's comment about promoting Russia's development and deployment of nuclear missiles.

During his presidential campaign, Trump refused to rule out the possibility of using nuclear weapons against the Islamic State, the Muslim extremist group.

In an interview around the same time, he even suggested he could support moves by Japan and South Korea to arm themselves with nuclear weapons for their own defense.

Trump's real intentions concerning the issue, however, are unclear as he later denied giving his support to the idea.

These remarks by Trump, who has adopted the slogan of "America first," seem to indicate the incoming U.S. president has a worrisome inclination to put great importance on nuclear arms as the core of U.S. military power.

The biggest worry is Trump's harsh criticism of the nuclear agreement with Iran, which he called "the worst deal ever negotiated." He has even signaled that he may overturn the pact.

If he does that, it would have an immeasurably harmful impact on the Middle East.

In recent years, the international community has begun embracing the notion that nuclear weapons must be eliminated because they are catastrophically inhumane.

The mayors of both Hiroshima and Nagasaki have called on Trump to visit their cities, which were both devastated by atomic bombings. They want the new American leader to recognize the inhumane nature of nuclear arms.

It is vital to strengthen international pressure on the Trump administration to share this recognition.

Last month, the United Nations made a formal decision to start international negotiations for a treaty to ban nuclear arms. The proposal was adopted in a U.N. General Assembly session, with 113 countries voting for it.

The first round of talks will be held in March. But the United States, which has been strongly opposed to such a treaty, will not take part in the negotiations. Nor will other nuclear powers, including Russia and France.

JAPAN SHOULD SERVE AS A BRIDGE

Japan, which is protected by the U.S. nuclear umbrella, also expressed its objection to the start of the negotiations. But Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida has signaled Japan's intention to be present at conferences to negotiate the treaty.

The envisioned treaty would be a big step forward toward the elimination of nuclear arms. But this undertaking should not lead to a wider rift between the nuclear powers and the rest of the world.

As the only country to have suffered the devastation of nuclear strikes, Japan, a major ally of the United States, has cast itself as a potential mediator between the two camps. Now it is time for Japan to play this very role.

Under the Japanese government's national security policy, the U.S. nuclear arsenal is seen as the key deterrent against the threat posed by North Korea and China.

Tokyo has expressed concerns that the proposed nuclear ban would be inconsistent with this policy. But there can be no real progress toward the elimination of nuclear weapons unless the world discards the notion that a nation can only ensure its security by maintaining nuclear deterrence.

In particular, countries that are dependent on the U.S. nuclear umbrella like Japan need to make serious efforts to help the world consign this long-established theory to the rubbish bin.

The start of the negotiations for a nuclear ban offers a great opportunity to think about this imperative. Japan should work with other countries protected by the U.S. nuclear umbrella, such as Australia, Germany and Canada, to explore ways to produce a treaty that is acceptable to them.

One idea worth serious consideration is the establishment of a period in which these countries will gradually reduce their dependence on nuclear deterrence provided by the United States.

If their non-nuclear allies start pursuing a path toward a ban on nuclear arms, the United States and other nuclear powers may begin to consider radical changes in their own nuclear arms policies.

What Japan is expected to do is to take actions that bring about a paradigm shift in the situation concerning this vital cause.

--The Asahi Shimbun, Jan. 6

Japan's moral responsibility

January 14, 2017

Join UN nuclear arms ban talks

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2017/01/14/editorials/join-u-n-nuclear-arms-ban-talks/#.WHpBK2Dmot>

The United Nations adopted a historic resolution last month calling on member states to start negotiations in March on a treaty to ban nuclear weapons. Despite the multitude of problems confronting the world today, the goal of abolishing nuclear arms should not be sidelined. All countries, in particular Japan — the sole nation in history to have suffered a nuclear attack — need to take the resolution seriously and enter the talks to lay the foundation for building a world without nuclear arms.

As he assumed the office of U.N. secretary-general on Jan. 1, Antonio Guterres, a former Portuguese prime minister and U.N. refugee agency chief, issued an “Appeal for Peace,” urging citizens, governments and leaders of the world to join him in making one shared New Year’s resolution: “Let us resolve to put peace first.” His call was most fitting in view of continuing emergencies such as the civil war in Syria, which has caused humanitarian crises and sowed the seeds of terrorism, and fears of possible genocide in South Sudan, where U.N. peacekeeping forces, including Self-Defense Forces troops, are deployed.

Guterres’ statement also carries importance when placed against the rising tendency among leaders to put their countries’ interests first, as symbolized by the campaign vows of U.S. President-elect Donald Trump. Particularly worrisome is Trump’s remarks on issues related to nuclear weapons. Last month, he said in a Twitter message, “The United States must greatly strengthen and expand its nuclear capability until such time as the world comes to its senses regarding nukes.” The next day — the day the U.N. resolution for talks on nuclear arms ban was adopted — he followed up by saying: “Let it be an arms race. We will outmatch them at every pass and outlast them all.” His statements represent an antithesis to what the U.S. and Russia, which together own much of the world’s nuclear arms stockpile, have done for more than three decades — to cut back on their arsenals.

As if in response to Trump’s words, Russian President Vladimir Putin boasted that his country has nuclear warheads that can penetrate any missile defense system in the world. He said: “We have made progress in improving our nuclear triad systems, including in terms of bypassing missile defense systems. And this system is much more effective than the U.S. missile defense system.”

Their statements mark a clear regression from what outgoing U.S. President Barack Obama professed and tried to achieve in his eight years in office — promoting nuclear disarmament — although he failed to change U.S. nuclear weapons policy and initiated a \$1 trillion overhaul of the nation’s nuclear arsenal. The leaders of the two most powerful nuclear weapons states must not forget the special responsibility they bear — along with other key nuclear powers Britain, China and France — to push nuclear disarmament under the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty. Given the questionable positions of Trump and Putin on the issue, it is all the more important for all the U.N. member states to make strenuous efforts to drive the upcoming negotiations to a successful conclusion.

Proliferation is an ongoing threat in Asia. North Korean leader Kim Jong Un said in his New Year’s Day speech that with its two bomb tests last year, his country “soared as a nuclear power” and is now a “military power of the East that cannot be touched by even the strongest enemy.”

Such a situation makes the Dec. 23 resolution adopted by the U.N. General Assembly to start talks on a treaty banning nuclear arms all the more significant. A clear majority — 113 member states — voted in favor of it, with 35 voting against and 13 abstaining. The resolution was initiated by Austria, Mexico, Brazil, Ireland, Nigeria and South Africa, which take a serious view of catastrophic humanitarian consequences of the use of nuclear weapons — the point stressed by survivors of the 1945 atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Regrettably, Japan, along with the five permanent Security Council members, which are nuclear weapons states, voted against the resolution. Japan, which relies on the U.S. nuclear umbrella, explained that the negotiations will deepen the confrontation between states that possess and those that do not possess nuclear arms. A government official reportedly confided that Tokyo cannot immediately say it is willing to

take part in the talks due to its considerations to the U.S. But Japan has the duty to take part and play a meaningful role in the negotiations as a nation that knows firsthand what are the consequences of a nuclear attack.

Japan's security alliance with the U.S. may make it difficult to clearly side with the non-nuclear powers that voted for the resolution. But government leaders should realize that Japan's position in the international community could be undermined if it ends up defending the interests of nuclear weapons powers. If it is committed to serving as a bridge between nuclear and non-nuclear weapons states, it needs to play a constructive role in the talks that will be convincing to both camps.

Letter to Trump

January 18, 2017

Ex-Hiroshima Mayor Akiba hopes for assurance of no nuke use in letter to Trump

<http://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20170118/p2a/00m/0na/011000c>

Former Hiroshima Mayor Tadatoshi Akiba, who spent many years campaigning against nuclear weapons, has sent a letter to U.S. President-elect Donald Trump conveying his thoughts from the city that was hit by the first atomic bomb used in warfare on Aug. 6, 1945.

- **【Related】** Full text of ex-Hiroshima Mayor Akiba's letter to Trump
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【Related】 Article and letter in Japanese

Born in 1942, Akiba could be described as an epitome of the postwar antinuclear movement. Seeing the film "Children of Hiroshima" ("Genbaku no ko") as an elementary school student served as a catalyst for Akiba's lifelong involvement with issues relating to Hiroshima and the atomic bomb.

When studying in the United States during his high school days, he learned that students there were taught "it was right to drop the atomic bomb" as a response to the Imperial Japanese Navy's attack on Pearl Harbor that sparked the war between Japan and the United States, and that they were told, "Remember Pearl Harbor." Even if he were to protest, he was greatly outnumbered. He decided he would tell people about Hiroshima, and while working for Tufts University, he started the "Akiba Project," dispatching local U.S. reporters to Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

After serving as a professor at Hiroshima Shudo University, Akiba served three terms in the House of Representatives, and then from 1999 to 2011 served three terms as mayor of Hiroshima. During his time as mayor he released in his own words Hiroshima's "Peace Declaration" on Aug. 6 every year. In 2009, he was impressed by U.S. President Barack Obama's call for a world without nuclear weapons, and the following year he visited the White House and directly asked the president to visit Hiroshima.

He held expectations for a positive effect from Obama's visit to Hiroshima in May last year, thinking, "U.S. society will change because of this. The world will certainly change to proceed on a path toward peace." However, the moves toward peace, which seemed to have gained momentum with Obama's Hiroshima visit, now appear to have come up against a headwind and are losing speed. Obama's aim to declare a no-first-use policy for nuclear weapons in autumn last year collapsed due to resistance from Congress. Some 113 countries passed a United Nations resolution in December last year to begin negotiations in March on a treaty prohibiting nuclear weapons, but the nuclear powers of the United States, Britain, France and Russia voted against it, while China abstained. When it comes to eliminating nuclear weapons, the international environment remains tough.

Akiba wrote his letter with the thought that he doesn't want the hopes and dreams heightened by Obama's visit to Hiroshima to be destroyed.

Two copies of the letter were sent in mid-January, one to the White House and the other to the U.S. Embassy in Japan. It remains to be seen how Trump will receive the feelings of those in Hiroshima as the United States' new president.

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Profile: Tadatoshi Akiba

Representative, Hiroshima Prefectural Congress against A- and H-Bombs

Convener, Hiroshima Committee of 1000 to Stop War

Head, Hiroshima Peace Office

Former Mayor, City of Hiroshima

Born in Tokyo in 1942. B.S. and M.S. in mathematics: University of Tokyo

Ph.D. in mathematics: Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Represented Hiroshima as a national Diet member from 1990 to 1999. Elected Mayor of Hiroshima in 1999 and served three terms until 2011.

From 2011 through 2014, served as Chairman of the Middle Powers Initiative (MPI), President of AFS Japan and Professor by Special Appointment of Hiroshima University.

As President of Mayors for Peace, helped the organization grow from around 440 members to approximately 5,000 during his tenure.

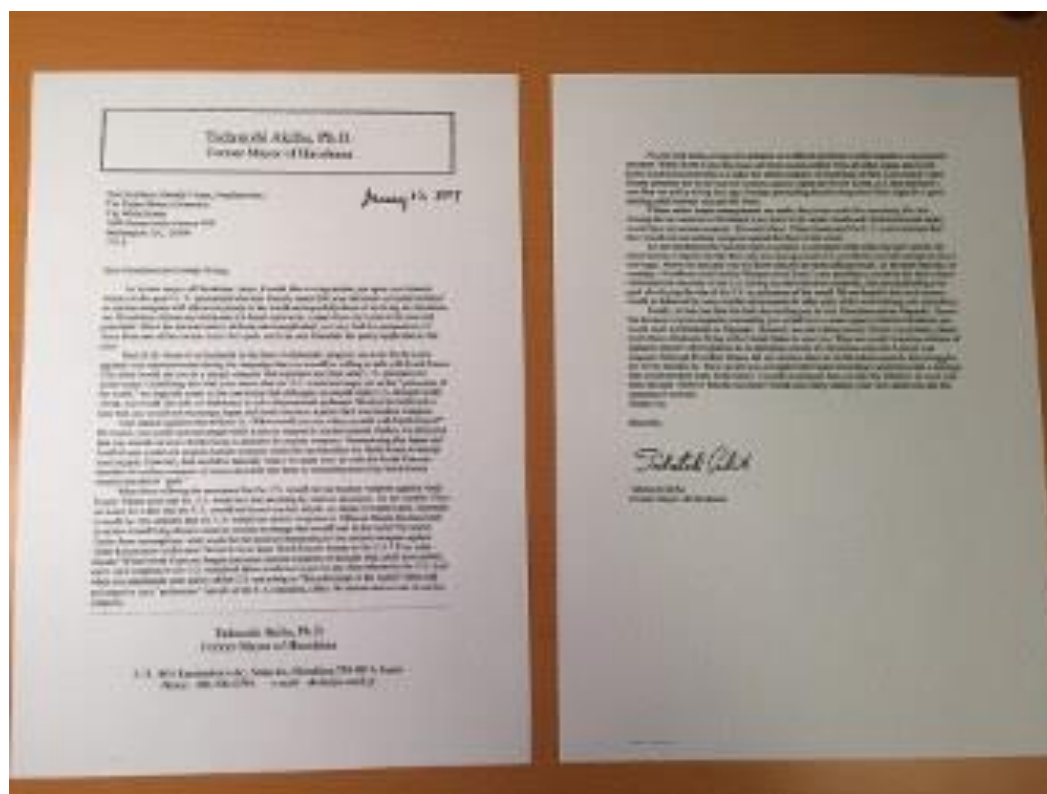
Received such awards as the Ramon Magsaysay Award (also known as the Asian Nobel Prize, 2010), Otto Hahn Peace Medal in God from the United Nations Association of Germany, Berlin-Brandenburg (2013).

Publications include "Mayor of Hiroshima" (Asahi Shimbun, 2011) and "Reconciliation instead of Retaliation" (Iwanami Shoten, 2015).

Full text of ex-Hiroshima Mayor Akiba's letter to Trump

January 18, 2017 (Mainichi Japan)

<http://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20170118/p2a/00m/0na/010000c>



Former Hiroshima Mayor Tadatoshi Akiba's letter to Trump. (Mainichi)

The following is the full text of a letter sent by former Hiroshima Mayor Tadatoshi Akiba to U.S. President-elect Donald Trump.

- 【Related】 Ex-Hiroshima Mayor Akiba hopes for assurance of no nuke use in letter to Trump
-

【Related】 Article and letter in Japanese

Dear President-elect Donald Trump,

As former mayor of Hiroshima, Japan, I would like to congratulate you upon your historic victory in this year's U.S. presidential election. Keenly aware that your decisions on matters related to nuclear weapons will affect everybody in the world and especially those of us living in Hiroshima, we, Hiroshima citizens and hibakusha (A-bomb survivors), expect these decisions to be wise and peaceable. Since the nuclear issue is delicate and complicated, you may find the perspectives of those from one of the nuclear issue's hot spots useful as you formulate the policy applicable to this area.

First of all, those of us frustrated by the lack of diplomatic progress vis-a-vis North Korea applaud your announcement during the campaign that you would be willing to talk with North Korea. This alone would put you in a unique category that separates you from other U.S. presidents of recent years. Combining this with your stance that the U.S. would no longer act as the "policeman of the world," we logically come to the conclusion that although you would retain U.S. strength in the world, you would first rely on diplomacy to solve international problems. We also feel relieved to hear that you would not encourage Japan and South Korea to acquire their own nuclear weapons.

One natural question that follows is, "What would you say when you talk with North Korea?" Of course, you would not encourage North Korea to expand its nuclear arsenal. Rather, we all expect that you would

convince North Korea to abandon its nuclear weapons. Guaranteeing that Japan and South Korea would not acquire nuclear weapons would be one incentive for North Korea to accept your request. However, that would be basically where we stand now. In order for North Korea to abandon its nuclear weapons, it seems desirable that there be something more that North Korea would consider its "gain."

What about offering the assurance that the U.S. would not use nuclear weapons against North Korea?

Please note that the U.S. would not lose anything by such an assurance. Let me explain. First, we know for a fact that the U.S. would not launch nuclear attacks on Japan or South Korea. Secondly, it would be very unlikely that the U.S. would use atomic weapons on China or Russia because such an action would bring about a massive nuclear exchange that would lead to the end of the world. Under these assumptions, what would be the point of threatening to use nuclear weapons against North Korea alone in the area? Would it be to deter North Korean threats to the U.S.? If so, what threats? When North Korea no longer possesses nuclear weapons or missiles that could successfully carry such weapons to the U.S. mainland, there would no longer be any direct threats to the U.S. And when you implement your policy of the U.S. not acting as "the policeman of the world," there will no longer be such "policemen" outside of the U.S. mainland, either. No threats and no use of nuclear weapons.

As you well know, a long-term solution to a difficult problem is often framed in a symmetric structure. While North Korea becomes safe from nuclear attack from all sides, Japan and South Korea need more protection. To make the whole situation symmetrical, all that is necessary is that Russia promises not to use nuclear weapons against Japan and South Korea, as China declared a non-first use policy a long time ago. Perhaps persuading Russia along these lines might be a good starting point between you and Mr. Putin.

If these rather simple arrangements are made, the picture would be something like this: Among the six countries of Northeast Asia, three in the center, South and North Korea and Japan, would have no nuclear weapons. The outer three, China, Russia and the U.S. would promise that they would not use nuclear weapons against the three in the center.

Let me emphasize the fact that such a scenario is consistent with what you have said so far about nuclear weapons and the fact only you among recent U.S. presidents are bold enough to turn a new page. When you succeed you will have realized an earth-shaking result. To be more specific, by creating a "Northeast Asia Nuclear Weapons Free Zone," your presidency would be the first to have eliminated the necessity of the U.S. having to police the area constantly, thus accomplishing your goal of reducing the role of the U.S. as policeman of the world. We are hopeful that such success would be followed by many similar achievements in other parts of the world during your presidency.

Finally, let me conclude this letter by inviting you to visit Hiroshima and/or Nagasaki. I know that because of your magnetic personality you would have a warm rapport with the hibakusha you would meet in Hiroshima or Nagasaki. However, you are a busy person. If time is a problem, please invite those hibakusha living in the United States to meet you. They are mostly American citizens of Japanese descent who happened to be attending schools in Hiroshima when the A-bomb was dropped. Although President Obama did not mention them in his Hiroshima speech, their struggles are worth listening to. They can tell you in English their heart-wrenching experiences and a message that would produce hope in the future. I would recommend that you take the initiative to meet with them because I believe that the encounter would most likely change your view about war and the meaning of survival.

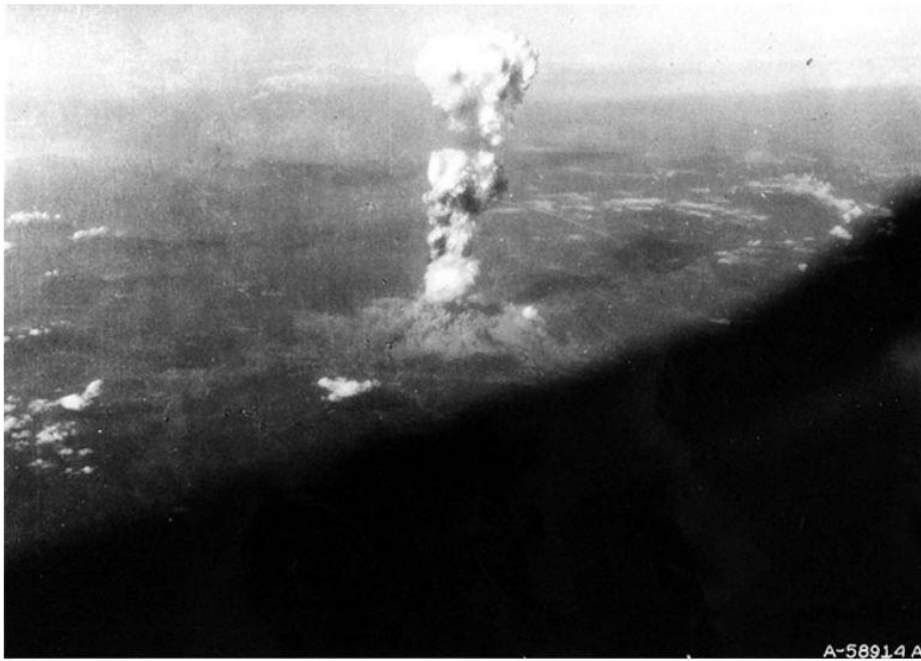
Thank you.

Sincerely,

Tadatoshi Akiba

Former Mayor of Hiroshima

Photos of Hiroshima bombing released



A photograph of a mushroom cloud over Hiroshima that is believed to have been taken from Enola Gay, the U.S. aircraft that dropped the atomic bomb on Aug. 6, 1945. The picture had been stored at the U.S. Library of Congress in Washington. (Provided by the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum)

January 25, 2017

Photos released of Hiroshima after atomic bombing

<https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/japan/>

Newly discovered photos of Hiroshima after the atomic bombing were unveiled to the media on Tuesday. They include an image believed to have been taken from the airplane that dropped the bomb on Hiroshima in August 1945.

The Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum showed the media 10 photos out of about 2,100 that it gathered last year.

The museum sent staff to 3 facilities in the US, including the Library of Congress and sites related to the US military.

One picture of the mushroom cloud is believed to have been shot from the Enola Gay right after it dropped the bomb. The museum says it's the third photo it knows of that was taken from the aircraft.

There is also an aerial view of Hiroshima city taken in January 1946 bearing the signatures of 3 Enola Gay crew members. Ground zero is marked with a red dot. The photo is believed to have been shot for a survey of the damage caused by the bomb.

The images will be made public on the museum's data base.

Curator Ryo Koyama says there is an abundance of buried material waiting to be uncovered and that the museum will continue its efforts to place them on file.

Hiroshima peace museum unveils new photo of mushroom cloud

By YOSUKE TAKASHIMA/ Staff Writer

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201701250064.html>

HIROSHIMA--The Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum has unveiled a new photograph of the mushroom cloud caused by the atomic bomb explosion in 1945, a shot apparently taken from Enola Gay after the U.S. plane dropped its payload.

The photo was obtained from the U.S. Library of Congress and joins two similar images of the mushroom cloud at the museum.

"The new picture may give us leads into analyzing the movement of the mushroom cloud," said a museum official Jan. 24.

The photo shows what looks like the lower section of an aircraft window and the entire mushroom cloud rising from central Hiroshima. The enormous cloud is in two parts, with a horizontal split. This split is characteristically visible immediately after an atomic bomb is detonated.

Based on the ID number in the right bottom corner of the image and other details, experts believe it was taken from Enola Gay, the B-29 bomber that dropped the atomic bomb on Aug. 6, 1945.

It is one of 10 new pictures relating to the atomic bombing that were released for public viewing Jan. 24.

They were among 2,100 photos collected when staff members of the Hiroshima museum scoured the Library of Congress, the U.S. Navy's Naval History and Heritage Command, also in Washington, and the National Museum of the U.S. Air Force in Ohio between November and December 2016. Some of the photos turned out to be the same as ones already in the museum's possession.

It was the staff members' first visit to those facilities and part of the Hiroshima museum's longstanding effort to convey the entire picture of the city's atomic bombing through photos and other data.

In a photo showing the area around Ground Zero looking in an eastward direction, it is easy to confirm that it was taken in January 1946.

That shot also shows a mark on Ground Zero and the signatures of the three Enola Gay crew members.

They signed as Paul Tibbets Jr., pilot, Thomas Ferebee, bombardier, and Theodore Van Kirk, navigator.

The museum has been making renewed efforts to collect photos documenting the atomic bombing from public venues overseas as many valuable images may be donated to such facilities as the World War II generation passes into history.

"We do have a good chance of finding new historical data," said Shuichi Kato, deputy director of the Hiroshima museum. "We want to expand our search to Russia and other countries as well, not just the United States."

The museum's collection stands at around 70,000 photographs. It plans to eventually make them available on its website.

Translation of "Ishibumi"



Ruined city: An aerial photo, used in the book 'Ishibumi,' shows the Hiroshima Prefectural Industrial Promotion Hall in the wake of the 1945 U.S. atomic bombing of Hiroshima. The building is now known as the Atomic Bomb Dome. | KYODO

January 28, 2017

Translated A-bomb book reminds us of the horrors of war

by Mie Sakamoto

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/culture/2017/01/28/books/book-reviews/translated-bomb-book-reminds-us-horrors-war/#.WI3hXvKDmos>

Kyodo

A recently released English translation of a Japanese book about 321 junior high school students killed by the 1945 U.S. atomic bombing of Hiroshima is a poignant reminder of the inescapable suffering and militaristic indoctrination of youth at the time.

Ishibumi, Edited by Naomi Saito, Translated by Yasuko Claremont and Roman Rosenbaum.

239 pages

POPLAR PUBLISHING CO., Nonfiction.

“Ishibumi” — meaning “cenotaph” — was first published in 1969, following a Hiroshima Television Corp. documentary about the bombing, and the first English translation of the text was published last December. The motivation to produce an English edition almost five decades after the original was released came after former U.S. President Barack Obama visited Hiroshima on May 27 last year, said the book’s editor, Naomi Saito. At the time, outspoken Japanese writer Ayako Sono wrote in a newspaper column that “Ishibumi” was the “only book” that needs to be given to the president.

The book, which was recently sent by a group of former students from Hiroshima Second Middle School to the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo, describes the circumstances surrounding the death of the children and four of their teachers from the school as told by parents who survived the bombing on Aug. 6, 1945.

The students had been mobilized to work in the war effort near where the bomb was later dropped, and nearly a third of them died instantly in the explosion, which had claimed an estimated 140,000 lives by the end of 1945.

Surviving children fled toward their homes, but many died without meeting their parents. Some students became unrecognizable due to their severe burns. In other cases, only their belongings were recovered.

One of the mothers who found no trace of her son, Bunji Kano, expresses her grief in the book:

“If only I could see him in my dreams, but he never appears there. His friends from primary school are now fathers of two or three children,” she says.

Saito, editor of the book, said she was encouraged by Sono’s words, and understood the need to educate people — about the tragedy, fear of atomic bombs and nuclear power — at a time when there are few remaining who directly experienced the war.

“We cannot forget the tragedy and should also take the nuclear accident seriously,” said Saito, referring to the Fukushima nuclear power plant disaster triggered by the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake.

The book also reveals the militaristic indoctrination in Japanese education that significantly influenced the way students behaved, even when facing death.

Before dying, students often sang military songs and the “Kimigayo” national anthem. They hailed the emperor and some pledged to take revenge on their attackers, it said.

In the book, a diary of one student describes how they bowed “as deeply” as they could to salute the national flag and made “a vow to fight the enemy to the end” at a morning assembly.

Yasuko Claremont, who helped translate the book, said it depicts an era when war was glorified, when children were taught that the emperor was a living god and forced to recite a military code.

“From the standpoint of current democratic education, children who appear in ‘Ishibumi’ received a wrong education that supported a wrong war,” Claremont said, adding that the book should be read widely because the risks posed by nuclear weapons are shared globally.

“The book has the mission of conveying to the next generation that there were children who were sacrificed for the wrong war,” said Claremont, an honorary senior lecturer at the University of Sydney.

“We must never go to war again.”

Atomic-bomb survivor Keiko Ogura, 79, who offers her experiences in English to some 2,000 foreign students annually, said she was “overwhelmed by grief” when she read the book and imagined the heartache of parents who lost children.

“I was deeply touched by the way this book is written, which refrains from being dramatic and depicts great sorrow in a detached tone, making readers feel the profound grief and anger that exists between the lines,” Ogura said.

Ogura said she is still haunted by the memory of suffering from the atomic bombing when she was 8 years old. Many other survivors were traumatized by the attack. Suffering from both death and survival was inevitable, she said.

"I'd like people to understand that nuclear weapons trigger mass killing," Ogura said.

The true horror, she said, is of helpless children having no place to hide when nuclear weapons are used.

Akio Matsumura: The link between nuclear plants and nuclear weapons

January 28, 2017

What is the Relationship of Nuclear Energy Plants and Nuclear Weapons?

<http://akiomatsumura.com/2017/01/what-is-the-relationship-of-nuclear-energy-plants-and-nuclear-weapons.html>

It is my important discovery from the Fukushima nuclear power accident that we failed to understand radiation from nuclear bombs and the radiation from the nuclear accident are little different in terms of the risk for human life. We have long accepted the dangers of attacks by state actors with nuclear weapons, and now we understand the threat of human error and natural disasters like earthquakes, tsunamis, and volcanoes on nuclear power plants. It seems that we have missed one key piece. What about attacks on nuclear power plants? Above all, I am concerned with terrorist attacks on nuclear power plants in volatile countries.

I have met eminent opinion leaders who are against nuclear weapons but support nuclear energy because it greatly contributes to reduce carbon dioxide. Both opinions might have valid arguments but it seems to me that both have lost sight of the long term risk and consequences.

I have asked Dr. Scott Jones, an International Advisory Council (IAC) member of the Nuclear Emergency Action Alliance (NEAA), to write on the relationship of nuclear energy plants and nuclear weapons. Dr. Scott Jones was a career naval officer with extensive nuclear weapon experience. He was a qualified nuclear weapons delivery pilot, and in intelligence assignments, a Nuclear Weapons Deployment Officer, and created Nuclear Weapon Target Annexes for U.S. European Command War Plans. Following this he became special assistant to Senator Claiborne Pell. He wrote an article entitled : Fading Memories and Lessons Learned.

– Akio Matsumura

What is the Relationship of Nuclear Energy Plants and Nuclear Weapons?

Scott Jones, Ph.D.

Setting aside the classical tenderness of the phrase, they are Mother and Child. Within the science community and the business of commercial nuclear energy this reality is a given. However, the "Atoms for Peace" commercial slogan may have introduced some ambiguity about this reality. This is quickly cleared up for the lay person by a January 1983 article published in *The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*:

“An even more specific confirmation of the economic advantage of the commercial-power route to bombs is available in a most distressing form: the admission by the U.S. government, in late 1981, that it is considering turning to commercial-reactor fuel as the source of plutonium for a new round of nuclear warheads. Would the United States even consider paying the political costs of such a move unless the economic attractiveness were compelling?”

The family relationship is the basic and fundamental link between nuclear energy production and nuclear weapons. However, it leads to other important relationships.

Nuclear weapons are the result of willful national security political decisions. After the development and use of nuclear weapons by the United States, every country that followed in the club of nuclear weapon owners made that decision because of an assessment that it gave them security that they otherwise would not have. It was claimed to be a defensive move to deter all potential enemies from use of nuclear weapons against them.

Fear is a great fertilizer. It takes a person with great independent wisdom to judge whether a perceived threat was reduced or exacerbated by following a path of fear. Judging is not the mission of the Nuclear Emergency Action Alliance. The NEAA's mission is to be of service when the emergency is underway.

What we can say with certainty is that a nuclear power plant nominates itself as a potential target. What cannot easily be predicted is who or what may be the aggressor. While progress is being made in predicting threats from nature, it will always remain to a significant degree a capricious force.

In the human realm, current and traditional enemies most certainly will be on target and threat lists. But the threat may be from a terrorist group that selects one of the world's existing 450 operating nuclear power plants in 31 countries, or later, one of the 60 new plants under construction in 16 countries. Which plant to attack may be decided because it is assessed to be the most vulnerable target for their capability to attack.

There is no shortage of targets now and the number is increasing. Success will not be measured by the amount of radiation released. That will almost be immaterial.

The global nuclear power plant network shares a nervous system that is highly tuned to every nuclear event. Deserved or not an accident or an attack will be perceived by much of the world through a memory lens of Hiroshima, Nagasaki, Chernobyl, and Fukushima.

Using nuclear to defend Japan?

February 15, 2017

Statement of nuclear option to defend Japan a first in 42 years

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201702150058.html>

THE ASAHI SHIMBUN

The latest joint statement by Japanese and U.S. leaders mentions nuclear weapons as a U.S. option to defend Japan for the first time since 1975, reflecting growing concerns about North Korea.

The statement released Feb. 10 by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and U.S. President Donald Trump after their summit talks in Washington states: “The U.S. commitment to defend Japan through the full range of U.S. military capabilities, both nuclear and conventional, is unwavering.”

Tokyo and Washington agreed they had to reaffirm the "nuclear deterrence" due to the threat posed by North Korea's repeated missile and nuclear tests, said Takeo Mori at a meeting of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party on Feb. 14.

Mori, director-general of the Foreign Ministry's North American Affairs Bureau, said it was only the second time for Japanese and U.S. leaders to release a document that uses the word "nuclear" in terms of the U.S. defense of Japan.

The previous one, in August 1975 by Prime Minister Takeo Miki and U.S. President Gerald Ford, stated: "(The) United States would continue to abide by its defense commitment to Japan under the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security in the event of armed attack against Japan, whether by nuclear or conventional forces."

That is believed to be the first document to unequivocally announce that Japan was covered by the U.S. "nuclear umbrella."

The nuclear option has never been specified in a joint statement by Japanese and U.S. leaders since then because it was considered obvious that the United States would use all means to defend Japan.

The two countries have avoided referring to nuclear deterrence out of consideration for the feelings of people in Japan, many of whom harbor intense feelings about the 1945 atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, according to a former senior Foreign Ministry official.

(This article was written by Kayoko Geji and Hajimu Takeda.)

Hibakusha children sue Govt

February 17, 2017

Children of Hiroshima survivors sue for coverage under hibakusha assistance law

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2017/02/17/national/crime-legal/children-hiroshima-survivors-sue-coverage-hibakusha-assistance-law/>

Kyodo

HIROSHIMA – Children of Hiroshima A-bomb survivors sued the central government on Friday, claiming Tokyo has denied them their constitutional right to pursue happiness by failing to provide financial support.

In what the plaintiffs say is the first lawsuit in Japan to address the impact radiation has had on the children of the hibakusha, they are demanding that the Atomic Bomb Survivors' Assistance Law be changed so that second-generation hibakusha can also be covered by it.

Arguing that their parents' exposure to radiation from the 1945 U.S. atomic bombing of Hiroshima affected their own health as well, the 22 second-generation hibakusha are demanding the government pay them ¥100,000 each in compensation.

The government provides qualified first-generation survivors with various forms of financial assistance and covers the full cost of their medical expenses, but the aid does not extend to their children.

The plaintiffs argue that although the government rejects the hereditary effects of the atomic bombing on the children of survivors, the possibility of such effects cannot be ruled out as some studies do recognize them.

They also say the government has a responsibility to qualify them for support because they are living under constant fear that they may someday develop a radiation-linked disease.

"It is a historic first step," Noboru Sakiyama, head of a national association of second-generation hibakusha groups, said in a news conference after filing the lawsuit.

"Through the trial we will seek support for second-generation hibakusha," he said.

Plaintiff Katsuhiro Hirano, 58, has always been worried about his health because he knows several second-generation hibakusha who developed cancer and leukemia when they were young.

"Every time I became sick, I was worried that it may be having something to do with" being the son of a hibakusha, Hirano said.

Hirano's mother got exposed to radiation when she came to look for her younger sister in the city two days after it was destroyed by the bomb on Aug. 6, 1945.

To pressure the government into granting them financial aid, second-generation hibakusha founded a group in the 1970s but to no avail.

The Health, Labor and Welfare Ministry has declined to comment, saying it has not seen the complaint yet. A similar lawsuit is expected to be filed Monday by the children of those who survived the Aug. 9, 1945, U.S. atomic bombing of Nagasaki.

US Nukes should stay "top of the pack"

February 23, 2017

Donald Trump says US could expand nuclear arsenal to stay 'top of the pack'

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/us-politics/donald-trump-us-president-nuclear-arsenal-weapons-defence-top-of-pack-a7596641.html>

Donald Trump has signalled he wants to expand America's nuclear arsenal in a major policy U-turn.

Mr Trump said it would allow the US to stay at the "top of the pack" and expressed concern that America has "fallen behind on nuclear weapon capacity".

He also hinted at a change of course from Washington on America's involvement in a new strategic arms limitation treaty.

Play Video

Donald Trump says a Russia-US conflict would be a nuclear holocaust 'like no other'

Repeating a phrase often used by the President to criticise trade pacts, the former property tycoon said the latest non-proliferation arrangement was a "one-sided deal".

Under the treaty, known as New Start, by February 2018 the US and Russia must limit their arsenals of strategic nuclear weapons to equal levels for 10 years.

Trump had to ask what nuclear treaty with Russia was during Putin call

It also permits both countries to have no more than 800 deployed and non-deployed land-based intercontinental and submarine-launched ballistic missile launchers and heavy bombers equipped to carry nuclear weapons.

But Mr Trump said: "Just another bad deal that the country made, whether it's Start, whether it's the Iran deal... We're going to start making good deals."

"I am the first one that would like to see everybody - nobody have nukes, but we're never going to fall behind any country even if it's a friendly country," he added.

"We're never going to fall behind on nuclear power.

graphs

"It would be wonderful, a dream would be that no country would have nukes, but if countries are going to have nukes, we're going to be at the top of the pack."

Speaking from the Oval Office, he told Reuters he was "very angry" at North Korea's ballistic missile tests and said accelerating a missile defence system in the region was among many options available to him.

The comments are the new US President's first on the issue of America's nuclear arsenal.

Barack Obama made reducing the world's nuclear weapons stockpile a priority during his eight years in office.

In a major speech just a few months after his inauguration in 2009, Mr Obama declared his "commitment to seek the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons".

Capacity of Uranium Enrichment Facilities by Country



source: [WISE Uranium Project](#). As of November 3, 2014 (Refreshed July 13, 2015)

Nuclear Arsenal by Country

All numbers are the maximum approximate estimates. The exact number of nuclear weapons in each country is a national secret. Thus, estimates are based on historical records and occasional leaks.

Total Inventory (nuclear warheads)



Source: Federation of American Scientists. As of March 31, 2015

Uranium Enrichment Facilities by Country

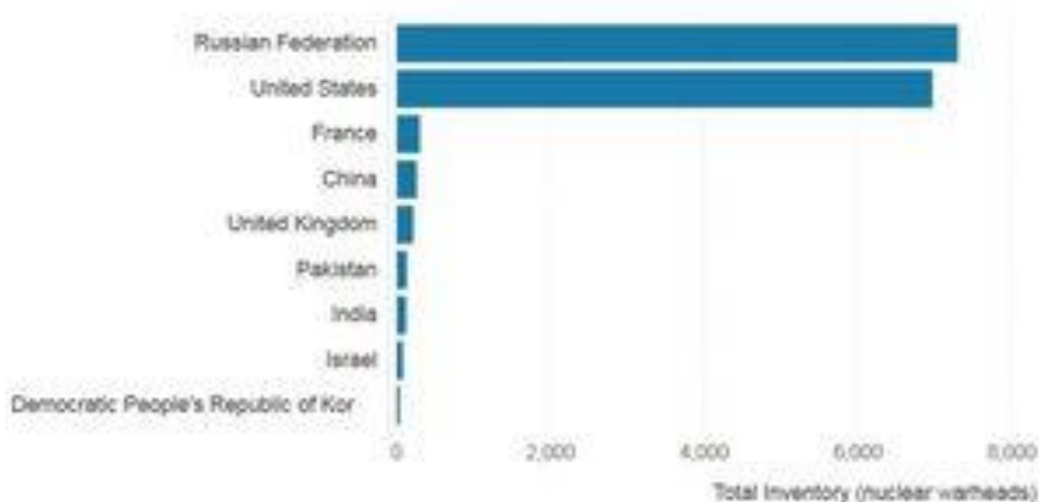
Includes currently running Gaseous Diffusion Plants and Centrifuge Plants

Country	Facilities	Uranium Enrichment Capacity
Russian Federation	4	16,600
Netherlands	1	5,400
United Kingdom	1	4,900
Germany	1	4,100
United States	1	3,700

Source: IAEA Uranium Report. As of November 15, 2014. IAEA. Last 10/2014.

Nuclear Arsenal by Country

All numbers are the maximum approximate estimates. The exact number of nuclear weapons in each country is a national secret. Thus, estimates are based on historical records and occasional leaks.



Source: Federation of American Scientists. As of March 31, 2016.

US nukes should stay "top of the pack" (2)

February 24, 2017

Trump wants U.S. nuclear arsenal to be the 'top of the pack'

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201702240013.html>

REUTERS

WASHINGTON--U.S. President Donald Trump said on Thursday he wants to ensure the U.S. nuclear arsenal is at the "top of the pack," saying the United States has fallen behind in its weapons capacity. In a Reuters interview, Trump also said China could solve the national security challenge posed by North Korea "very easily if they want to," ratcheting up pressure on Beijing to exert more influence to rein in Pyongyang's increasingly bellicose actions.

Trump also expressed support for the European Union as a governing body, saying "I'm totally in favor of it," and for the first time as president expressed a preference for a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, but said he would be satisfied with whatever makes the two sides happy.

Trump also predicted his efforts to pressure NATO allies to pay more for their own defense and ease the burden on the U.S. budget would reap dividends. "They owe a lot of money," he said.

In his first comments about the U.S. nuclear arsenal since taking office on Jan. 20, Trump was asked about a December tweet in which he said the United States must greatly strengthen and expand its nuclear capacity "until such time as the world comes to its senses regarding nukes."

Trump said in the interview he would like to see a world with no nuclear weapons but expressed concern that the United States has "fallen behind on nuclear weapon capacity."

"I am the first one that would like to see ... nobody have nukes, but we're never going to fall behind any country even if it's a friendly country, we're never going to fall behind on nuclear power.

"It would be wonderful, a dream would be that no country would have nukes, but if countries are going to have nukes, we're going to be at the top of the pack," Trump said.

Russia has 7,000 warheads and the United States, 6,800, according to the Ploughshares Fund, an anti-nuclear group.

"Russia and the United States have far more weapons than is necessary to deter nuclear attack by the other or by another nuclear-armed country," said Daryl Kimball, executive director of the independent Arms Control Association nonprofit group.

The new strategic arms limitation treaty, known as New START, between the United States and Russia requires that by Feb. 5, 2018, both countries must limit their arsenals of strategic nuclear weapons to equal levels for 10 years.

The treaty permits both countries to have no more than 800 deployed and nondeployed land-based intercontinental and submarine-launched ballistic missile launchers and heavy bombers equipped to carry nuclear weapons, and contains equal limits on other nuclear weapons.

Analysts have questioned whether Trump wants to abrogate New START or would begin deploying other warheads.

In the interview, Trump called New START "a one-sided deal."

"Just another bad deal that the country made, whether it's START, whether it's the Iran deal ... We're going to start making good deals," he said.

'WE'RE VERY ANGRY'

The United States is in the midst of a \$1 trillion (113 trillion yen), 30-year modernization of its aging ballistic missile submarines, bombers and land-based missiles.

Trump also complained that the Russian deployment of a ground-based cruise missile is in violation of a 1987 treaty that bans land-based American and Russian intermediate-range missiles.

"To me it's a big deal," said Trump, who has held out the possibility of warmer U.S. relations with Russia.

Asked if he would raise the issue with Putin, Trump said he would do so "if and when we meet." He said he had no meetings scheduled as of yet with Putin.

Speaking from behind his desk in the Oval Office, Trump expressed concern about North Korea's ballistic missile tests and said accelerating a missile defense system for U.S. allies Japan and South Korea was among many options available.

"There's talks of a lot more than that," Trump said, when asked about the missile defense system.

"We'll see what happens. But it's a very dangerous situation, and China can end it very quickly in my opinion."

China has made clear that it opposes North Korea's nuclear and missile programs and has repeatedly called for denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and a return to negotiations between Pyongyang and world powers.

But efforts to change Pyongyang's behavior through sanctions have historically failed, largely because of China's fear that severe measures could trigger a collapse of the North Korean state and send refugees streaming across their border.

Trump's meeting with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe earlier this month in Florida was interrupted by a ballistic missile launch by North Korea.

Trump did not completely rule out possibly meeting North Korean leader Kim Jong Un at some point in the future under certain circumstances but suggested it might be too late.

"It's very late. We're very angry at what he's done, and frankly this should have been taken care of during the Obama administration," he said.

According to Japanese news reports, the Japanese government plans to start debate over the deployment of a U.S. missile defense system known as the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense, or THAAD, and the land-based Aegis Ashore missile defense system to improve its capability to counter North Korean ballistic missiles.

The strength of Trump's remarks in favor of the EU took some Brussels officials by surprise after his support for Britain's vote last summer to exit from the EU.

"I'm totally in favor of it," Trump said of the EU. "I think it's wonderful. If they're happy, I'm in favor of it."

Statements by him and others in his administration have suggested to Europeans that he sees little value in the Union as such, which Trump last month called a "vehicle for Germany."

One step forward, two steps backwards

February 24, 2017

Trump backs missile shield against North Korea, pushes upgrades to nuclear arsenal

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2017/02/24/national/politics-diplomacy/trump-backs-missile-shield-north-korea-pushes-upgrades-nuclear-arsenal/>

Reuters, Kyodo

WASHINGTON – U.S. President Donald Trump said Thursday he is "very angry" at North Korea's ballistic missile test earlier this month, and that boosting a missile defense system for Japan and South Korea is among the options to counter provocative acts by Pyongyang.

In an interview with Reuters, Trump said he wants to build up the U.S. nuclear arsenal to ensure it is at the "top of the pack," reversing his predecessor Barack Obama's goal of achieving a world without nuclear weapons.

Trump said China could solve North Korea's nuclear issue "very easily if they want to," urging Beijing to exert more influence on Pyongyang to get it to rein in its missile and nuclear weapons programs, which violate U.N. Security Council resolutions.

"There's talks of a lot more than that," Trump said, when asked about the missile defense system.

"We'll see what happens. But it's a very dangerous situation, and China can end it very quickly in my opinion," he said.

China said over the weekend that it will suspend coal imports from Pyongyang until the end of the year as part of tightened sanctions against the country in accordance with a UNSC resolution.

But China, the main economic and diplomatic benefactor of North Korea, has been reluctant to put too much pressure on the country, fearing it could destabilize Kim's regime.

Scholars say China has a strategic interest in ensuring the stability of North Korea because it serves as a buffer zone between it and South Korea, a U.S. ally.

North Korea test-fired what it said was a new type of mid- to long-range ballistic missile on Feb. 12, Pyongyang's first provocative act since Trump was sworn in on Jan. 20.

Analysts regarded the launch as a test of Trump's North Korea policy.

Trump did not completely rule out the possibility of meeting North Korean leader Kim Jong Un in the future under certain circumstances, but suggested it might be too late.

"It's very late. We're very angry at what he's done, and frankly this should have been taken care of during the Obama administration," Trump said.

The missile launch interrupted Trump's meeting with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe earlier this month in Florida.

The Japanese government reportedly plans to start a debate on deploying a U.S. missile defense system known as the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD), as well as the land-based Aegis Ashore missile defense system, to improve its capability to counter North Korean ballistic missiles.

Alluding to Obama's call to reduce the role of nuclear weapons and eventually rid the world of them, as he pledged in his landmark speech in 2009 in Prague, Trump said the United States has "fallen behind on nuclear weapon capacity."

"It would be wonderful, a dream would be that no country would have nukes, but if countries are going to have nukes, we're going to be at the top of the pack," he said. "We're never going to fall behind any country even if it's a friendly country."

Trump complained that the Russian deployment of a ground-based cruise missile is in violation of a 1987 treaty that bans land-based American and Russian intermediate-range missiles.

Trump said he would raise the issue with Russian President Vladimir Putin "if and when we meet." But Trump said he has no meetings scheduled as of yet with Putin.

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In the interview, Trump called New START "a one-sided deal."

"Just another bad deal that the country made, whether it's START, whether it's the Iran deal ... We're going to start making good deals," he said.

Trump also expressed support for the European Union as a governing body, saying "I'm totally in favor of it," and for the first time as president expressed a preference for a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, but said he would be satisfied with whatever makes the two sides happy.

The strength of Trump's remarks in favor of the EU took some Brussels officials by surprise after his support for Britain's vote last summer to exit from the EU.

"I'm totally in favor of it," Trump said of the EU. "I think it's wonderful. If they're happy, I'm in favor of it."

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Keeping an eye on N. Korea

February 26, 2017

Govt. to set up new nuclear monitoring post

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20170226_13/

The Japanese government plans to set up an observation point in northern Japan with the help of an international agency to step up the monitoring of North Korea's nuclear activity.

The Vienna-based Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization monitors nuclear tests by measuring seismic waves and checking for radioactive substances in the air.

The observation points in Japan include 2 sites in Okinawa and Gunma prefectures that can detect radioactive substances such as xenon.

The equipment will be installed in northern Japan by the end of the year. The government will pay about 2.4 million dollars to cover the costs.

North Korea seems to have restarted reactor

January 28, 2017

US group: North Korea has likely restarted reactor

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20170128_14/

A US research group says satellite imagery indicates North Korea has restarted operations at a reactor that produces plutonium for use in nuclear weapons.

The Johns Hopkins University team released the results of its analysis on Friday.

The team says imagery of the reactor in Nyongbyon on January 22nd shows a water plume coming from the reactor's cooling outlet, "an indication that the reactor is very likely operating."

The group says that a river that flows near the experimental reactor is mostly frozen over, except where the water released from the reactor mixes with the river.

The team said on January 18th that satellite images suggested North Korea may have been preparing to restart the reactor.

South Korea's Defense Ministry announced last August that the North had resumed reprocessing spent nuclear fuel to extract plutonium.

The ministry issued its 2016 white paper on January 11th, saying North Korea has some 50 kilograms of weapons-grade plutonium, up 10 kilograms from a 2014 report.

What's going on at the UN negotiations?

<http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/nuclear-weapon-ban/reports/NBD1.3.pdf>

To all endorsers of the Montreal Declaration [and others]:

Here is a ten page newsletter on what is going on at the UN nuclear negotiations for a treaty to ban nuclear weapons.

Trump and the future of world peace

March 2, 2017

EDITORIAL: Trump's call to boost military spending could spark arms race

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201703020030.html>

U.S. President Donald Trump again wasted a great opportunity to lay out a clear vision of the role the United States will play in the world under his leadership.

In his first address to Congress on Feb. 28, Trump offered no definitive answers to such vital questions as how America will relate to the rest of the world and how it will work to secure a stable international order under his presidency.

In the speech, Trump stressed his "achievements" during his first 40 days in office and announced big-ticket policy promises, including a 1-trillion-dollar (114 trillion yen) investment in infrastructure and massive tax cuts.

With his presidency hobbled by political confusion from a series of missteps including the resignation of a newly appointed national security adviser and his own controversial remarks, he apparently tried to

boost his standing with the public by emphasizing his policy agenda to create jobs and stoke economic growth.

But Trump didn't give specific answers to such key questions as how to finance huge infrastructure investment while cutting taxes and his blueprints for the future of health-care insurance and social security programs.

The president stuck to the core elements of his policy narrative. He laid particular stress on his commitment to revitalizing the U.S. economy and improving security at home while turning his back on multilateral free trade deals and calling on America's allies to shoulder more of the burden of their defense.

It is a shame that Trump's first Congressional policy speech was little more than a sales pitch for his "America First" agenda.

What is particularly baffling to the international community is his pledge to seek a historic increase in defense spending.

On the previous day, Trump proposed to boost military spending by about 10 percent. By calling for a large hike in the defense budget, he has made it clear that he will shift U.S. security policy from former President Barack Obama's strategy, which was focused on international cooperation, toward a "peace by force" approach reminiscent of President Ronald Reagan's era in the 1980s.

U.S. defense spending still accounts for more than a third of the total military expenditures of the world.

Why does this military superpower need to ramp up further its already enormous outlays on arms? How can Trump's call for higher defense spending be consistent with his refusal to commit the United States to playing the role of the "policeman of the world" or his demand that Washington's allies should bear their fair share of the security burden? He didn't answer these questions.

Long gone is the Cold War era, when the world was divided into two camps with superpowers locked in a confrontation. The global security landscape has changed radically since those days as terrorism has emerged as the primary threat.

Trump should learn that international cooperation is even more important than military power for responding effectively to security threats transcending national borders.

His call for a sharp increase in military spending may reflect his desire to stoke job growth by supporting the defense industry.

But this strategy could accelerate a global arms race involving China, Russia and Middle Eastern countries. Trump should reconsider his America First agenda if it means thinking only about his country.

Also worrisome is his reported plan to fund the increase in defense expenditures by slashing the budgets for such policy areas as diplomacy and aid to developing countries.

Financial aid to developing countries has made significant contributions to international efforts to eliminate the root causes of conflict, such as economic disparities and corruption.

Washington's failure to broker an effective peace deal in Syria, which has become tangled in civil war, has underscored the fact that what the United States lacks is not military power but the diplomatic power for grueling negotiations.

In the United States, Congress has the power to formulate budgets and enact laws.

We are eager to see Congress engaged in tough-minded debate on what kind of policy the United States should pursue to ensure stability and prosperity for both itself and the world without seeking a quick fix based on the peace by force formula.

What does Japan want?

March 5, 2017

Japan remains cautious on UN nuclear ban talks

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20170305_13/

Japan remains cautious about taking part in talks at the United Nations to draw up a legally binding treaty to ban nuclear weapons.

The negotiations will begin on March 27th in New York in line with a resolution adopted at the UN General Assembly in December.

Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida suggested willingness to participate, saying Japan should assert its stance towards "a world without nuclear weapons." But he said **the decision will be made by the government.**

Japan's ally, the United States said it will not participate in the meetings and other nuclear weapon states are likely to follow suit.

Officials also say the worsening security environment including recent North Korea nuclear and missile tests should be factored in as well.

Detailed photos of horoshima bombing



March 7, 2017

Enlarged photos detail A-bomb's destruction of Hiroshima

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201703070050.html>

By YOSUKE TAKASHIMA/ Staff Writer

HIROSHIMA--A professor has produced perhaps the most detailed aerial photos of Hiroshima before and after the atomic bombing, giving historians an even better grasp of the destruction of the city.

Yukihiro Yoshida, a fine arts professor specializing in product design at Hiroshima City University, and Kensuke Hashimoto, a teaching associate at the university, enlarged and created higher resolution versions of photographs taken by U.S. forces during and after World War II.

The Stimson Center, a Washington-based think tank advocating the abolition of nuclear weapons, had donated the images to the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum in July last year.

The photos were likely presented to U.S. President Harry S. Truman, who greenlighted the dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima on Aug. 6, 1945.

Yoshida and Hashimoto divided each photo into two sections and took pictures of them separately. When the new pictures of the images were combined, each photograph contained about 150 million pixels.

The photos include aerial shots of downtown Hiroshima around April-July 1945. Other pictures taken a day after the atomic bombing show smoke rising from some areas of the city.

The Atomic Bomb Dome--currently part of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park--standing amid the leveled city, as well as planes on an airfield, can be seen in two photographs taken on Sept. 7, 1945.

"There are possibilities that we can assess the damages in more detail with the enlarged images," said Ryo Koyama, a curator at the museum, which is currently analyzing the photos. "We also hope to use the images to identify when undated photographs of Hiroshima were taken."

Trump & nuclear treaties



Why Mess With a Nuclear Treaty, Mr. Trump?

https://www.nytimes.com/2017/03/06/opinion/why-mess-with-a-nuclear-treaty-mr-trump.html?emc=edit_th_20170306&nl=todaysheadlines&nid=32427321&r=0

By THE EDITORIAL BOARD MARCH 6, 2017

Some of President Trump's most irresponsible statements have involved, of all things, nuclear weapons, where there is no room for irresponsibility or error. His latest shocker was a comment denigrating the New Start Treaty, a pact that he said gave Russia an advantage and penalized the United States.

Mr. Trump doesn't seem to understand much about the vast and apocalyptically lethal nuclear arsenal he commands. Reuters reported early last month that during a telephone call in which President Vladimir Putin of Russia raised the possibility of extending the treaty, Mr. Trump paused and asked aides what it was. Once enlightened, he reportedly denounced the treaty to Mr. Putin, and then, in an interview with Reuters two weeks later, called it "just another bad deal." He's wrong.

Negotiated by President Barack Obama and in effect since February 2011, New Start limits the United States and Russia each to no more than 1,550 deployed nuclear warheads on more than 700 deployed intercontinental ballistic missiles, submarine-launched ballistic missiles and nuclear bombers. The deadline for complying is February 2018. The United States is down to 1,367 deployed nuclear warheads, but that number will edge up when the process is completed; Russia is at 1,796. Each is expected to end up at 1,550.

The treaty also has important verification requirements, like semi-annual data exchanges on the two nations' weapons systems. Both agreed to notify each other of certain nuclear-related actions, and can conduct up to 18 inspections annually of the other's strategic forces. Mr. Obama knew how essential the treaty was, as did the Senate, which ratified it 71 to 26. It also had the unanimous support of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and seven former military commanders who had controlled the strategic nuclear forces. If Mr. Trump is foolish enough to leave the treaty, the United States and Russia will be free to build up arsenals that have declined by thousands of weapons since the late 1960s. That would set off a costly, destabilizing arms race. And by eliminating verification and transparency requirements, America would lose insight into Russia's program.

Mr. Trump not only seems inclined to undermine New Start limits; he has said he wants to ensure that America's arsenal is at the "top of the pack." It is already ahead of the pack with more than enough nuclear weapons, backed by advanced conventional weapons, to keep the country safe.

When stockpiled warheads are factored in, the United States and Russia have roughly 4,500 warheads each, and both are engaged in modernization programs. The next-largest arsenals are France's, at 300 warheads, and China's, at 260. A 2013 Pentagon study said America could maintain a strong and credible deterrent with 1,000 warheads.

After refusing to engage in new nuclear negotiations with the Obama administration, the Russians are signaling a willingness to extend New Start when it expires in 2021. Some Republicans are opposed, either because they have an ideological aversion to any restraints on the military or because they want to block an extension in retaliation for Moscow's deploying a new nuclear-capable cruise missile, a deployment that violates a different treaty.

That missile issue can be worked out separately while Mr. Trump focuses on negotiating a New Start extension and then considers deeper reductions. There is nothing to be gained from a new nuclear arms race or from glib and ignorant talk about who is at the "top of the pack."

China calls for new talks on N. Korea's nukes

China premier calls for return to talks on Korean nukes

March 15, 2017 (Mainichi Japan)

Chinese President Xi Jinping, left, and his Premier Li Keqiang arrive for the closing session of the National People's Congress held in the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, China, on March 15, 2017. (AP

Photo/Andy Wong)

<http://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20170315/p2g/00m/0in/070000c>

BEIJING (AP) -- Chinese Premier Li Keqiang called Wednesday for new talks to reduce tensions on the Korean Peninsula, ahead of a visit to the region this week by U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson that is expected to focus heavily on efforts to end North Korea's nuclear weapons and missile programs.

Li said China was a strong supporter of U.N. resolutions aimed at nudging the North toward ending its programs, and had "fully complied" with economic sanctions on Pyongyang.

He acknowledged the rising tensions on the Korean Peninsula and northeast Asia in general, saying any conflict would be disastrous for all sides.

"So what we hope is that all the parties concerned will work together to deescalate the situation, get issues back on the track of dialogue and work together to find proper solutions," Li said at his annual news conference held on the final day of the annual legislative session.

China is Pyongyang's most important diplomatic ally and economic partner, and has been under growing pressure from the U.S. to use its influence to rein in actions by the North seen as provocative.

China has long urged a resumption of six-nation denuclearization talks on hold since North Korea withdrew from them in 2009, and says its leverage over Pyongyang is limited. Despite that, China last month suspended imports of North Korean coal for the rest of the year, depriving Kim Jong Un's regime of a crucial source of foreign currency.

Tillerson arrives in Beijing on Saturday following visits to U.S. allies Japan and South Korea.

Complicating his mission to Beijing are China's strenuous objections to the initial deployment to South Korea of a U.S. missile defense system that have strained relations between Seoul and Beijing and sparked a snowballing economic boycott against South Korea among some Chinese.

In addition to assuaging China's concerns, Tillerson will also seek to arrange a much-anticipated visit by President Xi Jinping to the United States.

Tensions have escalated over North Korean moves to accelerate its weapons development. The North conducted two nuclear tests and 24 ballistic missile tests last year, deepening concern in Washington that it could soon develop a nuclear-tipped missile capable of reaching the U.S. mainland.

Last week, North Korea launched four missiles into the ocean off Japan as the U.S. and South Korea began annual drills. The allies call the drills routine. Pyongyang regards them as an invasion rehearsal.

Hoping to kick-start discussions, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi last week suggested that North Korea might suspend its nuclear and missile activities in exchange for a halt to the joint U.S.-South Korea drills.

The U.S. swiftly dismissed the proposal and Li did not repeat it.

However, the premier did indicate that China was growing weary of the constant tensions and threats of conflict surrounding its formerly close communist neighbor.

"It's just common sense that no one wants to see chaos on his doorstep," he said.

Pakistan's pledge

March 14, 2017

Pakistan vows to prevent atomic technology from falling into hands of nonnuclear states

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2017/03/14/asia-pacific/pakistan-vows-prevent-atomic-technology-falling-hands-nonnuclear-states/#.WMfff2dFeot>

AP

ISLAMABAD – Pakistan vowed on Tuesday to work to prevent nonnuclear states from gaining the technology that would put them on the path to acquiring nuclear weapons — even though both Islamabad and neighbor New Delhi have defied nonproliferation treaties to become competing nuclear powers. The pledge was delivered by Sartaj Aziz, adviser to Pakistan's prime minister on foreign affairs, at a multination conference on non-proliferation in Islamabad, attended by representatives of South and Central Asia, as well as China and Russia.

Pakistan is signatory to the 13-year-old United Nations resolution aimed at curbing the spread of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons, with a particular emphasis on preventing nonstate actors from getting their hands on massively destructive technology as well as materials.

But Islamabad has had a sketchy history in this area, with the architect of its nuclear weapons program, Qadir Khan, accused of clandestinely giving North Korea nuclear weapons technology.

When India started down the nuclear road by launching its program in the early 1970s, Pakistan was quick to follow. The tensions between the two, both signatories of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Agreement, have raised the specter of a nuclear confrontation between the two hostile neighbors. India and Pakistan have fought three wars since 1947 when majority Muslim Pakistan was created from the larger South Asian subcontinent.

Aziz, the Pakistani adviser, also urged the participants at the Islamabad conference to implement regulatory precautions to avoid siphoning off technology into the wrong hands.

The international community has also expressed fears militants could lay their hands on nuclear materials, particularly with the continued presence of al-Qaida and the Islamic State group in both Pakistan and neighboring Afghanistan.

Pakistan has come under sanctions in the past because of its nuclear weapons program and as a result has run into shortages of spare parts for its nuclear reactors that provide energy. It has also been critical of U.S. support for India's inclusion in the Nuclear Suppliers Group, which devises guidelines for nuclear exports and nuclear-related exports.

The two-day conference also includes representatives of the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and Interpol.

Trump thinks he can order Japan around

March 16, 2017

Trump administration opposes Japan's participation in U.N. talks on banning nukes

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2017/03/16/national/politics-diplomacy/trump-administration-opposes-japans-participation-u-n-talks-banning-nukes/>

Kyodo

The U.S. administration of President Donald Trump has taken a hard line on Japan's possible participation in U.N. talks later this month on a treaty to outlaw nuclear weapons, sources close to bilateral ties said Wednesday.

In conveying its opposition, Washington has used an expression indicating its strong aversion, the sources said. Japan has not made clear whether it will join the talks starting March 27 at the U.N. headquarters in New York.

While advocating a world free of nuclear weapons as the only country ever attacked with atomic bombs, Japan also relies on U.S. nuclear deterrence for protection.

Japan is expected to make a final decision soon following Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida's talks with U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson on Thursday in Tokyo, the sources said.

At their first meeting last month, Kishida and Tillerson discussed the nuclear weapons ban treaty, prompting working-level officials from both sides to exchange views on the matter, they said. It was during the process that Washington expressed its opposition to Japan participating in the U.N. talks, they said.

Some close to Prime Minister Shinzo Abe believe Japan should not join the talks, given the importance Tokyo attaches to its alliance with the United States, the sources said. As a lawmaker elected from Hiroshima, Kishida has pushed for participation in the talks.

There is concern within the Japanese government that participation in the talks will hurt the alliance with the United States in the medium to long term, especially as Abe and Trump reaffirmed the U.S. commitment to use nuclear weapons to deter attacks against its allies at their summit last month, a senior Japanese official said.

The Trump administration's stance on the treaty is "more severe" than the preceding administration under Barack Obama, the official said.

A U.S. government source, meanwhile, said the United States has been consistent in its stance against allies taking part in the negotiations on the treaty for abolishing nuclear weapons.

A landmark resolution endorsed by the U.N. General Assembly on Dec. 23 paved the way for the start of talks on the treaty.

Of the five recognized nuclear weapons states, the United States, Britain, France and Russia are opposed to the treaty and will not join the talks, while it is uncertain whether China will take part.

Anti-nuclear nongovernmental organizations and Japanese groups of surviving victims of the 1945 atomic bombings have urged the Japanese government to join the talks in a bid to realize the abolition of nuclear weapons.

Toward a nuclear-armed Japan?

March 19, 2017

Amid North Korea threat, Tillerson hints that ‘circumstances could evolve’ for a Japanese nuclear arsenal

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2017/03/19/national/amid-north-korea-threat-tillerson-hints-circumstances-evolve-japanese-nuclear-arsenal/#.WM52NWdFeos>

by Jesse Johnson

Staff Writer

The possibility of a nuclear-armed Japan has again been raised by the Trump administration, after U.S. Secretary of State Tillerson appeared to say in an interview ahead of his visit to Beijing that, with “all options on the table” regarding the North Korean threat, “circumstances could evolve” in terms of Tokyo acquiring atomic weapons.

In an interview Saturday with the lone reporter allowed to accompany him on his visits to Japan, South Korea and China, the top U.S. diplomat, who had previously dismissed the need for Tokyo and Seoul to acquire nuclear weapons, was asked if his views had shifted, given the surging tensions on the Korean Peninsula.

“We say all options are on the table, but we cannot predict the future,” Tillerson replied. “So we do think it is important that everyone in the region has a clear understanding that circumstances could evolve to the point that for mutual deterrence reasons, we might have to consider that.”

Still, Tillerson said that there were “a lot of steps and a lot of distance between now and a time that we would have to make a decision like that.”

For now, he said, Washington’s policy of working to rein in Pyongyang’s nuclear program remained unchanged.

“A denuclearized Korean Peninsula negates any thought or need for Japan to have nuclear weapons,” Tillerson said during the interview with the conservative Independent Journal Review, his only remarks to the media outside of official events.

The administration of President Donald Trump has come under fire for proposing to slash the State Department’s budget by nearly a third, as well as for the slow pace of nominating top officials.

As of Friday, the Trump administration had yet to send a single nomination — aside from Tillerson — to the Senate for the department’s top posts.

Tillerson himself has also faced flack over his decision to block most American reporters from his first major trip to Asia, saying: “I’m not a big media press access person. I personally don’t need it.”

Bonnie Glaser, an Asia expert at the Center for Strategic and International Studies think tank in Washington, said Tillerson's remarks on Japan acquiring nuclear weapons appeared to be a shift in thinking.

"It strikes me as a new position," Glaser said, noting that President George W. Bush had warned China, the Pyongyang's biggest patron, that if the North developed nuclear weapons, Japan and South Korea — and even Taiwan — might do the same.

Trump and Tillerson have vowed to make a clear break from the policy of his predecessor, President Barack Obama, who pursued a policy of "strategic patience" to wait out the regime.

Still, other observers chalked Tillerson's controversial remarks up to simple inexperience and heightened concerns over the new administration's often-time contentious moves.

"This seems to be a combination of Tillerson's inexperience, poor staff work and the extra scrutiny that goes with everything Team Trump says," said Jeffrey Lewis, an arms control expert with the Center for Nonproliferation Studies at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies in California.

"I don't think there is anything behind this," he added. "It's just smoke and mirrors to distract from the fact that they haven't the slightest idea what to do."

Van Jackson, an associate professor at the U.S. Defense Department's Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies in Honolulu, said the secretary of state's remarks highlighted the risk-fraught environment on the Korean Peninsula.

"Tillerson's language does hint at some precedent-breaking possibilities," Jackson said, adding that might be mostly due to "a lack of internal discipline" at the inexperienced Trump State Department, which he said had been "gutted."

"But even if that's true, there are only two realistic paths open to the United States in dealing with North Korean nukes: preventive strikes, or some form of tacit acknowledgement that North Korea is a nuclear state," he said.

Jackson said both choices were fraught with risks, but if the U.S. accepted some level of North Korean nuclearization, there would be "second-order consequences."

"Specifically, you have to accept a degree of mutual vulnerability with North Korea, akin to how we've done with Russia and China," Jackson said. "If we did that, the regional military balance will put pressures on Japan and South Korea to eventually go nuclear as well."

While he agreed with Tillerson that such a scenario remained far off, if it were to happen at all, Jackson did not rule the possibility out.

"If all options are on the table, one must surely be allies — not only the United States — achieving a state of mutual vulnerability with North Korea," he said. "Hopefully it doesn't come to that, but right now our options are pretty thin."

Experts say that Japan, with a significant stockpile of plutonium and technical know-how, could build an atomic arsenal relatively quickly. However, most are quick to point out the numerous obstacles to such a move, including the pacifist Constitution, widespread anti-nuclear sentiment and the nation's so-called three non-nuclear principles of not possessing, developing or introducing nuclear weapons into the country.

Trump's foreign policy approach, however, has left room for maneuvering on the issue.

While on the campaign trail, then-candidate Trump lambasted the financial contributions by Tokyo and Seoul for maintaining U.S. military bases in their countries, saying he might withdraw American forces unless the allies coughed up more money to retain them.

Trump also stoked concern when he suggested that he would be open to Japan and South Korea developing their own nuclear arsenals, asserting in a March interview with The New York Times that the U.S. “cannot be the policeman of the world.”

“Unfortunately, we have a nuclear world now,” Trump said. “Would I rather have North Korea have (nuclear weapons) with Japan sitting there having them also? You may very well be better off if that’s the case.”

While Trump has backed off many of these statements in the wake of meetings with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, including one in which he said Washington was “100 percent” behind Tokyo after North Korea’s simultaneous launch of four missiles into waters near Japan this month, other remarks by the U.S. president have raised concerns of a nuclear arms race, particularly in Asia.

In his first comments on the issue since taking office, Trump said last month that he wants to ensure the U.S. atomic arsenal is at the “top of the pack,” saying the United States had fallen behind in its weapons capacity.

“It would be wonderful, a dream would be that no country would have nukes, but if countries are going to have nukes, we’re going to be at the top of the pack,” he was quoted as saying.

Prior to that, Trump had said in a December tweet that “the United States must greatly strengthen and expand its nuclear capability until such time as the world comes to its senses regarding nukes.”

Tillerson, however, broke with Trump on the issue of Japan acquiring nuclear weapons in January, when he told his lawmakers at his confirmation hearings that he didn’t “think anyone advocates for more nuclear weapons on the planet.”

Trump to review "bedrock" nuke accord?

March 22, 2017

Trump to review goal of world without nuclear weapons—aide

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201703220022.html>

REUTERS

WASHINGTON--The Trump administration is reviewing whether it will reaffirm the goal of a world without nuclear weapons, a White House aide said on Tuesday, referring to an aim embraced by previous Republican and Democratic presidents and required by a key arms control treaty.

Christopher Ford, the National Security Council's senior director for weapons of mass destruction and counter-proliferation, said an examination of whether global nuclear disarmament "is a realistic goal," would be conducted as part of a wider assessment called the Nuclear Policy Review.

Ford also said the administration is reviewing responses to Russia's deployment of nuclear-capable cruise missiles, which Washington has denounced as a violation of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) treaty.

He downplayed the chances of new U.S.-Russia strategic nuclear arms cuts and said **Washington would for now adhere to the Iran nuclear deal.**

In negotiations scheduled to open next week, the administration also will oppose--as the Obama administration did--an international treaty abolishing nuclear weapons, he said.

Ford, the only senior nuclear policy official appointed by President Donald Trump since he took office in January, spoke to a nuclear policy conference put on annually by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, a Washington-based think tank.

His comments were the first by a top administration official that gave some indication of White House thinking on nuclear arms policy following a series of provocative comments and tweets that Trump made during and after the 2016 presidential campaign.

NUCLEAR-FREE WORLD

Trump has said that while he would like to see nuclear weapons abolished, he wants the United States to have an unrivaled arsenal. He also said that the United States has "fallen behind" in its nuclear capabilities, even though it is in the midst of a 30-year, \$1.3 trillion (145 trillion yen) drive to modernize what most experts agree is the world's most powerful nuclear force.

Trump has supported the development of nuclear weapons by Japan, South Korea and Saudi Arabia, called for using nuclear arms against the Islamic State militant group and denounced the Iran nuclear deal as "a disaster" that he would "rip up."

Ford, a lawyer who has served as a Republican congressional staffer and a State Department arms control official, said he could not comment on many issues until the Nuclear Posture Review, or NPR, and other security and foreign policies reviews are completed. Experts expect the review to take as long as a year. He also stressed that the reviews may result in continuing to follow policies pursued by former President Barack Obama.

But he said one issue being examined is whether the administration would reaffirm U.S. adherence to the goal of eventual global nuclear disarmament, an objective reaffirmed by Obama in an April 2009 speech in Prague.

"We are reviewing policy across the board," Ford said. "That necessarily includes reviewing, among many other things, whether the goal of a world without nuclear weapons is in fact a realistic objective in the near-to-medium term in light of current trends in the international security environment."

For decades, Ford said, there has been tension between the U.S. desire for nuclear arms abolition and the need to maintain "a robust and effective arsenal that is capable of ensuring our security and that of our allies in Europe and the broader Asia-Pacific region against both nuclear and non-nuclear threats."

An increasingly unstable world and growing threats to U.S. national security demand a review of "whether traditional U.S. fidelity to that visionary end-state of abolition and demonstrating fidelity to it by pointing to rapid progress in reducing arsenals is still a viable strategy," he said.

Daryl Kimball, executive director of the Arms Control Association, a Washington think tank, said **the United States is legally bound to that goal as a signatory of the 1968 Non-Proliferation Treaty, the bedrock accord of the international system for halting the spread of nuclear weapons.**

Listen to their voices

March 27, 2017

A-bomb survivor calls for nuclear arms ban

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20170327_09/

A survivor of the 1945 atomic bombing of Hiroshima has called for the creation of a new global treaty to prohibit nuclear weapons.

Toshiki Fujimori spoke in New York on Sunday at a meeting of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons. The NGO group held the meeting ahead of the start of UN negotiations on a legally binding international nuclear ban treaty.

Fujimori experienced the bombing when he was 16 months old. He is scheduled to speak on the first day of the UN negotiations.

Fujimori expressed hope for the talks, which he referred to as an attempt to draw up a treaty that has yet to arrive due to strong pressure from nuclear powers.

He said the voices of atomic bomb survivors and their numerous supporters have spurred momentum to ban the weapons. He said such voices remind the world of the inhumanity of nuclear weapons, which cause indiscriminate mass destruction of human life and inflict radiation on survivors.

He stressed that while their exposure problems are at different stages, each of the 170,000 survivors still alive in Japan has a cross to bear until death.

He urged people to listen to the cries of survivors and move a step forward toward achieving a world free of nuclear weapons.

Joining UN nuclear ban talks... or not

March 26, 2017

Japan mulling to speak before UN nuclear ban talks

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20170326_11/

Japan is considering delivering a speech at the United Nations ahead of talks to draw up a legally binding treaty to ban nuclear weapons.

The negotiations will begin on Monday in New York in line with a resolution adopted at the UN General Assembly in December.

Japan, along with the United States and other nuclear weapons states, voted against the resolution. Tokyo is now considering whether to join the negotiations.

Representatives of participating countries are scheduled to give speeches immediately before the start of the talks.

Japan's UN diplomatic sources say officials are now arranging to have Tokyo's envoy to the Geneva-based Conference on Disarmament, Nobushige Takamizawa, speak.

Takamizawa is expected to stress the importance of abolishing nuclear weapons, as a representative of the only country to have experienced atomic bombings.

He is also likely to reiterate Tokyo's position that disarmament should occur in stages, with the cooperation of both nuclear and non-nuclear states.

Attention is focused on whether Japan will take part in the negotiations, while the US and other nuclear powers are not expected to join.

March 25, 2017

UN official wants Japan to join anti-nuclear talks

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20170325_16/

A UN disarmament official has indicated Japan should join negotiations toward a treaty to legally ban nuclear weapons.

UN High Representative for Disarmament Affairs Kim Won-soo made the remark when he met with Japanese Communist Party Chairperson Kazuo Shii on Friday at UN headquarters in New York.

Shii told reporters that he exchanged views with Kim over the 5-day denuclearization talks that open on Monday.

Kim has been quoted as saying he expects Japan to take an active role in the talks as the only country to have experienced atomic bombings.

He reportedly stressed the importance of US and other nuclear powers also taking part.

The nuclear armed states have indicated they do not intend to work toward a treaty due to their own national security concerns.

Shii also met with Japan's UN Ambassador Koro Bessho. He said Bessho told him that Japan's participation is still undecided.

UN & Nukes



Historic vote at the UN means nuclear weapons will be illegal in 2017

Last year something historic happened at the United Nations. Despite enormous pressure from the United States, 123 nations, all with equal standing at the UN General Assembly, voted to start a process in 2017 to negotiate a ban on nuclear weapons. Why isn't this news circulating like wildfire? Why aren't there parties on the street?

27th March: Talks to start on a treaty to ban nuclear weapons

Talks start on the 27th of March, 2017 in New York. Anti-nuclear civil society organisations and countries supporting a ban treaty can barely contain their excitement that a substantive step in fulfilling NPT article VI commitments to nuclear disarmament is going to take place for the first time since the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty was opened for signing in 1996 (it still hasn't come into force because eight countries still refuse to sign it: China, Egypt, India, Iran, Israel, North Korea, Pakistan, United States).

*"The Conference, while welcoming achievements in bilateral and unilateral reductions by some nuclear-weapon States, notes with concern that the total estimated number of nuclear weapons deployed and stockpiled still amounts to several thousands. The Conference expresses its deep concern at the continued risk for humanity represented by the possibility that these weapons could be used and **the catastrophic humanitarian consequences that would result from the use of nuclear weapons**" (emphasis added).*

So said the 2010 UN conference to review progress of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) after a turbulent 4 weeks in which several delegations walked out when the Iranian president got up to speak at the start of the conference, and the Iranians had to then delay agreement of the consensus document at the end of the conference in order to seek advice from Tehran because they never thought the USA would agree to calls for a conference to establish a zone free of nuclear weapons in the Middle East.

Nevertheless, the 2010 consensus document was accepted by all countries except the 4 nuclear-weapon-bearing countries that aren't signatories to the NPT and weren't there (India, Pakistan, Israel and North Korea) and so a new impulse was unleashed to drive forward civil-society organisations and countries anxious to disarm the planet, in the same way that efforts to ban landmines and cluster weapons were able to focus on their effects on human beings and not on geopolitical and business interests of weapons sellers and manufacturers.

A series of conferences to analyse these humanitarian consequences was held in Norway,

Mexico and Austria in 2012 and 2013, in which we learnt that 100 bombs dropped on cities would effectively wipe out human civilisation as we know it today, and Austria launched a pledge in the final meeting in Vienna, subsequently known as the Humanitarian Pledge which included a call...

*“...on all states parties to the NPT to renew their commitment to the urgent and full implementation of existing obligations under Article VI, and to this end, **to identify and pursue effective measures to fill the legal gap for the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons** and we pledge to cooperate with all stakeholders to achieve this goal”* (emphasis added)

In 2014, support for the pledge grew, it was turned into the form of a resolution at the UN General Assembly and received the support of 127 countries. In 2015, the NPT failed to make any progress on nuclear disarmament at all and a consensus document couldn't be agreed upon even when non-nuclear-weapons states allowed all strong language in favour of progress to be removed. But what was seen to be a failure as some was taken as an opportunity by those nations supporting the humanitarian initiative and new resolutions were taken to the UN General Assembly; firstly in 2015 to convene an Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) to examine effective measures for nuclear disarmament which recommended advancing with a ban-treaty; and secondly in 2016 to convene talks in 2017 to act on the OEWG recommendation for a treaty effectively prohibiting nuclear weapons. This latter resolution L.41 of 2016 was passed with the overwhelming support of 123 countries.

And here we are!

Talks start on the 27th of March, 2017 in New York and anti-nuclear civil society organisations and countries supporting a ban treaty can barely contain their excitement that a substantive step in fulfilling NPT article VI commitments to nuclear disarmament is going to take place for the first time since the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty was opened for signing in 1996 (it still hasn't come into force because eight countries refuse to sign it: China, Egypt, India, Iran, Israel, North Korea, Pakistan, United States). No one expects the USA, Russia, France and the UK to take part in the talks, but China looks like it will. No one expects even one nuclear weapon to be dismantled following this treaty either.

Nevertheless, it is an important step on the path to NPT compliance and a legal norm will be established, nuclear weapons will be legally banned, their possession will be stigmatised, doing business with companies involved in the supply-chain of nuclear weapons will be very controversial in the eyes of the public, and civil society organisations will have new weapons with which to sensitise the public through divestment campaigns about the devastating effects of a nuclear war and the increasing imperative to get rid of them once and for all.

And this is what the USA, Russia, France and the UK fear the most: negative public opinion towards nuclear weapons, because it is only internal domestic pressure that will create the conditions for nuclear disarmament.

Talks convene for a week in March and for two further weeks in July.

Pressenza and our network of friends in the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons will be there to bring our readers all the latest news, developments and stimulating opinions on everything to do with this historic moment on the road to nuclear

disarmament.

What is Kishida really trying to say?

March 28, 2017

Kishida: Nuclear ban talks may deepen rift

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20170328_22/

Japan's Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida says the absence of nuclear powers from UN talks on a treaty to legally ban the weapons could be unrealistic.

Kishida spoke to reporters on Tuesday about why **Japan, the only country to be a victim of the atomic bomb, is also not in attendance.**

He said the negotiations without nuclear powers are unrealistic in helping to create a world without nuclear weapons and could further deepen the rift between nuclear and non-nuclear countries.

Kishida said it would be realistic to continue to patiently work within frameworks such as the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, where both sides take part.

He added he is confident that this is the shortest path to a world without nuclear weapons.

"It's very difficult to eliminate a weapon that you haven't prohibited first"

March 28, 2017

Nuclear ban talks begin at U.N., but U.S., Russia others boycott

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201703280017.html>

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

UNITED NATIONS--U.N. talks aimed at banning nuclear weapons began Monday, but **the United States, Russia, China and other nuclear-armed nations are sitting out a discussion they see as impractical.**

Supporters of the potential pact say it's time to push harder toward eliminating atomic weapons than nations have been doing through the nearly 50-year-old Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

With international tensions rising while public awareness of the nuclear threat has waned, "the need for progress on nuclear disarmament has rarely been as urgent as it is today," U.N. Under Secretary-General for disarmament Kim Won-soo said as the talks opened.

More than 100 countries voted for a U.N. General Assembly resolution last year to start discussions, with nations including Austria, Brazil and Ireland leading the effort.

But the United States and several other nuclear powers say a ban won't work and the world should instead stick with a more gradual approach.

"As a mom, as a daughter, there is nothing I want more for my family than a world with no nuclear weapons. But we have to be realistic," U.S. Ambassador Nikki Haley said as she and colleagues from Britain, France and about 20 other nations gathered Monday outside the General Assembly chamber to show opposition to the talks starting inside.

Haley argued that a treaty would end up disarming nations "trying to keep peace and safety," while "bad actors" wouldn't sign on or comply.

"North Korea would be the one cheering, and all of us and the people we represent would be the ones at risk," she said.

North Korea carried out two nuclear tests last year and has continued to test ballistic missiles as recently as this month, in violation of U.N. resolutions. The North has said its nuclear efforts are meant as a deterrent against what it sees as U.S. hostility. North Korea's U.N. Mission didn't immediately respond to an inquiry Monday about the disarmament talks.

Opponents of the ban plan say gradual disarmament has made a difference. The U.S. has reduced its nuclear arsenal by 85 percent under the Non-Proliferation Treaty, Haley said; Britain has cut its nuclear forces by over 50 percent since the height of the Cold War, according to Ambassador Matthew Rycroft. Still, "our countries continue to rely on nuclear deterrence for security and stability," French Deputy Ambassador Alexis Lamek said.

Chinese and Russian representatives didn't join the boycotters' news conference, but the two countries had said previously that they wouldn't participate in the talks.

Japan--which during World War II experienced the only atomic bomb strikes in history--did take part in opening remarks Monday. Saying that North Korea's actions challenge the non-proliferation approach, Japanese representative Nobushige Takamizawa said it was "crucial to have a realistic perspective as to how nuclear disarmament measures can contribute effectively to addressing actual security concerns." The negotiations aim to create "a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading towards their total elimination." Backers hope a document will be inked by July.

Any treaty would bind only nations that ratified it. But despite the opposition from key nuclear players, supporters of the proposed ban feel it could help create a new international norm of rejecting atomic arms.

"It's very difficult to eliminate a weapon that you haven't prohibited first," said Beatrice Fihn, the executive director of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, an advocacy group.

International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN)

Nuclear Weapons Ban Brief

<http://thebulletin.org/blog>

On **March 27, 2017**, a majority of the world's nations gathered at the United Nations headquarters in New York City to begin historic **negotiations on a treaty to ban nuclear weapons**.

The Ban Brief offers regular updates on the ban negotiations, their background, and their implications. It is written by Tim Wright, Asia-Pacific director of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, and Ray Acheson, director of Reaching Critical Will.

Ban Brief

thebulletin.org

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28 March 2017

As 120 countries push for a ban, nuclear survivors take the floor

Ray Acheson

Governments plough forward on nuclear weapons prohibition, despite US opposition. On Tuesday, a Hiroshima survivor and a survivor of nuclear testing made the humanitarian case.

28 March 2017

Nuclear ban negotiators reject US-British-French boycott logic

Tim Wright

The many governments meeting to create a treaty banning nuclear weapons aim for an agreement as early as July, and even the Pope weighs in.

23 March 2017

The ban movement's early impact

Tim Wright

Efforts to establish a UN treaty prohibiting nuclear weapons are already having an effect, pressuring governments to explain why they're sitting out negotiations.

20 March 2017

A historic turning point for disarmament

Tim Wright

Almost half a century has passed since governments concluded the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Today, most of the 190 states party would agree that too little has been done toward realizing its core objective: a world free of nuclear weapons.

Vast majority of Japanese support treaty talks

March 30, 2017

Great majority of Japanese back nuke ban treaty talks: JCP headalks

<http://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20170330/p2a/00m/0na/009000c>

NEW YORK -- The Japanese Communist Party (JCP) chief slammed the Japanese government for abstaining from a United Nations conference to negotiate a treaty outlawing nuclear weapons despite the vast majority of Japanese supporting the treaty talks.

- **【Related】** Hibakusha 'heartbroken' over Japan's opposition to nuke ban treaty
- **【Related】** Japan says it will not take part in nuclear ban treaty talks without nuclear powers
- **【Related】** Address by 'hibakusha' Toshiki Fujimori at U.N. conference to ban nuclear weapons

"It is such a shame that the Japanese government is absent from this conference. However, the vast majority of the Japanese people strongly support the negotiations," JCP head Kazuo Shii told a March 29 session of the first round of talks on the Nuclear Weapons Convention at the U.N. Headquarters. Shii stated that through the conclusion of the nuclear arms ban treaty and efforts among civil societies across the globe, "We can press countries that are dependent on nuclear weapons to change their policies and join efforts to abolish nuclear weapons."

Why is Japan not speaking out as an atomic bombed country?

March 29, 2017

Editorial: Why won't Japan speak out as an A-bombed country?

<http://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20170329/p2a/00m/0na/006000c>

The Japanese government has announced it will abstain from talks underway at the U.N. headquarters on establishing a convention to outlaw nuclear weapons. By abstaining from the talks, Japan is effectively abandoning its opportunity as the world's only atomic-bombed country to serve as a bridge between nuclear and non-nuclear states.

- **【Related】** Hibakusha 'heartbroken' over Japan's opposition to nuke ban treaty
- **【Related】** Japan says it will not take part in nuclear ban treaty talks without nuclear powers
- **【Hibakusha Series】**
- **【Hiroshima Atomic-Bombing Archives】**

On the reason for Japan's abstention, Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida pointed out that the five nuclear powers of the United States, Russia, Britain, France and China are not taking part, and said that the talks "may have the opposite effect of deepening the divide between nuclear and non-nuclear states."

In October last year, the Japanese government voted against a U.N. resolution on launching the talks. But at the time, Kishida expressed the view that Japan would actively take part in negotiations that were to begin in March.

The state of opposition between nuclear and non-nuclear states remains unchanged. It therefore makes no sense for Japan to first say it will participate and bridge the gap, only to make a turnabout and declare it will not participate, citing fears that opposition between the two camps would deepen.

The government's decision, which overturned the foreign minister's previous statement that Japan intended to participate, damages trust in Japanese diplomacy.

Changes in global affairs since last autumn appear to have influenced Japan's decision not to participate. In November last year, Donald Trump won the U.S. presidential election, and the Trump administration has taken an active stance toward bolstering his country's nuclear capabilities. The United States and other nuclear powers argue that it is not realistic in terms of security to establish a convention outlawing nuclear weapons when facing the threat of North Korea's missile and nuclear development.

The United States is said to have pressed Japan to abstain from the talks. Some Japanese government officials took the position that even if Japan took part in negotiations, it would be limited to stressing its opposition to the convention, creating the impression of a negative stance, which would be meaningless. But this is an overly defensive position.

For Japan to participate as a bridge-builder, it needed to prepare the proper environment, by expanding the ring of like-minded countries, for example. But there is no evidence that Japan made such efforts.

Another round of negotiations is due to be held between June and July, and it is possible that a draft of the nuclear weapons convention could be compiled at that time.

It is said that such a treaty would be weak without the participation of nuclear states, but it is nevertheless possible that it would play a major role in the long run in shaping international opinion on banning nuclear weapons. It is lamentable that Japan is not taking part in that process and speaking out as a country that has suffered as an atomic-bombed country.

Izumi Nakamitsu appointed head of UN nuclear disarmament department

March 30, 2017

Nakamitsu appointed UN head of disarmament

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20170330_06/

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has appointed Izumi Nakamitsu of Japan as the next Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs.

Nakamitsu is the first Japanese woman to take up an under-secretary-general post at UN headquarters in New York.

Nakamitsu was born in 1963. She has been engaged in refugee aid activities at the United Nations and planning of peacekeeping operations. Since 2014, she has been Assistant Administrator for Crisis Response at the UN Development Programme.

In her latest appointment, **she will command the UN disarmament department under the secretary-general.**

UN spokesman Farhan Haq told a news conference on Wednesday that Nakamitsu is a very dedicated, professional member of the United Nations.

Haq said she has expertise in development, migration, disarmament and other affairs, and is qualified for

the post.

Observers say Nakamitsu will face challenges at a time when nuclear powers and non-nuclear nations are at odds over drawing up a legally binding ban on nuclear weapons. Japan announced that it would not take part in the negotiations on such a treaty.

Has Japan forgotten?

March 29, 2017

March 27, 2017

Atomic Bomb Survivor Criticizes Japan

<https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/editors/3/atomicbombsurvivorcriticizesjapan/>

Japan has decided not to attend the first round of UN talks on a nuclear weapons ban -- and a Japanese atomic bomb survivor had some harsh words for his country's stance.

"Japan is doing the opposite of what we survivors expect it to do as the only nation having experienced atomic bombings," says Toshiki Fujimori, who is with the Japan Confederation of A- and H-Bomb Sufferers Organizations.

Nuclear powers have boycotted the discussions. The aim of the proposed treaty will be to oppose nuclear weapons on the grounds that they violate international law.

US Ambassador to the UN Nikki Haley says no one believes North Korea would agree to a ban.

"Today, when you see those walking into the General Assembly to create a nuclear weapons ban, you have to ask yourself, are they looking out for their people? Do they really understand the threats that we have?" Haley says.

The outlook for full disarmament has dimmed, with US President Donald Trump saying if other countries maintain nuclear arsenals, so will America.

Survivor Urges Action

Fumitaka Sato

As the UN talks continue, one "hibakusha," or atomic bomb survivor in Japan, is adding her voice to the call for a world free of nuclear weapons.

Keiko Ogura was just 8-years-old when the US dropped an atomic bomb on her city of Hiroshima. She's now 79, and the leader of a group who shares similar experiences.

At New York University, she recounted a tale of junior high school students who died in the bombing.

"This is the fact. So I would like to say you that please see the fact," Ogura says.

Ogura and the students discussed why some people defend the US atomic bombings on Japan.

"You have met with the grandson of the pilot who dropped the bomb. How do you view forgiveness as a survivor?" she was asked.

"We have to work together, because nowadays, it's not 'you're enemy, I'm victim of bomb', no, it's not such an age, you know," Ogura replied.

Doctor Robert Jay Lifton, a psychiatrist who interviewed survivors like Ogura in the 1960s, also took part in the session.

"The story of Hiroshima is one plane, one bomb, one city. That's why we have to listen to her," Lifton says.

Ogura also visited the UN headquarters -- the place for negotiations on a nuclear weapons ban treaty. Non-nuclear powers proposed a resolution to start the talks.

"The biggest challenge is to abolish nuclear weapons. We should not say it's OK to possess them as long as they're not used. I believe it's important to reflect upon the horror once again and bear in mind how important the upcoming negotiations are," Ogura says.

She and other survivors are pinning their hopes on the negotiations. Another round of talks will be held this summer. The final report will be submitted to the UN General Assembly in the fall.

EDITORIAL: Japan's decision to sit out nuclear talks dereliction of postwar duty

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201703290037.html>

The Japanese government can no longer be persuasive when it talks about "leading the world toward the abolition of nuclear weapons" as the only nation to have suffered atomic bombing.

By abandoning its self-appointed role as a "bridge" between the nuclear powers and non-nuclear nations, the government has betrayed not only hibakusha in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, but many citizens as well.

At the outset of new negotiations at the United Nations to establish a treaty to ban nuclear weapons, the Japanese delegation announced it would not take part in the talks.

More than 100 non-nuclear nations are taking part, while established nuclear powers such as the United States, Russia and China—along with North Korea—are boycotting the talks.

The purpose of the discussions is to legally ban the use and possession of nuclear weapons on grounds of their "inhumanity." Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida explained that the talks "could prove counterproductive as they would deepen the rift between the nuclear powers and non-nuclear powers." We simply cannot comprehend Kishida's thinking.

Japan, the world's sole victim of atomic warfare, is also protected by the U.S. nuclear umbrella. It has always taken on the role of a bridge between the nuclear powers and non-nuclear nations.

Now more than ever, Japan needs to live up to that role, given the deepening rift.

To declare non-participation by falling in step with the nuclear powers is nothing short of blatant dereliction of duty.

The nuclear powers are vehemently opposed to a nuclear ban treaty, which they view as a threat to their security policies based on nuclear deterrence.

The U.S. ambassador to the United Nations held a joint news conference with the representatives of about 20 nations to protest the treaty outside the conference hall. In doing so, the naysayers seemed to emphasize the necessity of such a treaty.

The leaders of the nuclear powers must first appreciate the inhumanity of nuclear weapons. None of these countries has denied the possibility of using nuclear weapons if circumstances require it. But once the treaty comes into force, the use of nuclear weapons will become an international crime.

U.S. President Donald Trump, who champions beefing up America's nuclear arsenal, said last month, "If countries are going to have nukes, we're going to be at the top of the pack."

North Korea continues its provocations with its nuclear and missile development programs.

But if the nuclear ban treaty clearly spells out that nuclear weapons must not be used, it should serve as a powerful brake on these moves.

Kishida cited the severity of the security environment around Japan as another reason for sitting out the negotiations. In addition to the threat posed by Pyongyang, China is engaged in seemingly unstoppable military expansion. There is a strong sense within the Japanese government that the nuclear ban treaty would undermine the U.S. nuclear umbrella and is, therefore, not desirable.

True, nuclear disarmament must be pursued carefully so as not to erode regional stability. But precisely for this reason, Japan ought to have chosen to participate in the talks and offered ideas on a treaty that will be acceptable to more countries--for example, by allowing countries to postpone moving out of a nuclear umbrella.

Austria, Mexico and other non-nuclear powers intend to compile a draft treaty by July.

It is still not too late for Japan to change its mind. Japan must join the negotiations immediately.

Japan, Australia slammed for no show at nuke ban talks

<http://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20170329/p2g/00m/0dm/026000c>

March 29, 2017 (Mainichi Japan)

NEW YORK (Kyodo) -- A Japanese atomic bomb survivor and an Aboriginal Australian who lived through multiple nuclear tests slammed their respective governments Tuesday for not participating in U.N. negotiations on a treaty to ban nuclear weapons.

"I especially condemn the Japanese government's inability to fully commit to these negotiations," said Setsuko Thurlow, who lived through the atomic bomb blast on Aug. 6, 1945, that destroyed her hometown of Hiroshima.

"Indeed, yesterday morning the Japanese government official's speech deepened hibakusha's feelings of being continuously betrayed and abandoned by their own country," she said in her speech during a session of the negotiations, referring to the Japanese terms used for the atomic bomb survivors.

Thurlow referenced remarks made Monday by Japan's disarmament ambassador Nobushige Takamizawa, who explained that Tokyo would not take part in the talks that got under way at U.N. headquarters on Monday.

Although Japan has said it wants a nuclear-weapon-free world, it had been vague in the lead-up to the conference about whether it would join the U.N. talks, reflecting its reliance on the U.S. nuclear deterrent for protection.

"Instead, they (the Japanese government) should take an independent position, which responds to the will of the Japanese people," Thurlow stated.

The five nuclear weapon states -- Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States -- which are also permanent members of the U.N. Security Council, have abstained from the conference, which aims to hammer out a landmark treaty that would outlaw nuclear weapons for the first time ever.

Thurlow called on the approximately 115 countries that are participating in the conference "to establish a clear new international standard to declare in no uncertain terms that nuclear weapons are illegitimate, immoral and illegal."

Speaking after Thurlow was Sue Coleman Haseldine, who described how as a small child she was impacted by the nuclear weapons testing that the British secretly carried out in the remote area of Maralinga beginning in the 1950s, which greatly impacted her and her family.

In addition to high incidence of cancer in that area, there are currently efforts under way to set up nuclear waste dump sites which pose more hazards to her community.

"Together we need to connect the past, present and future and work towards a treaty to ban all nuclear weapons so there will be no new victims under a mushroom cloud," she said in her speech. "The treaty should acknowledge the permanent damage done to people, land and culture across generations and particularly for indigenous people worldwide."

"I am actually ashamed of (the Australian government)" for not attending the conference, she told Kyodo News. She stressed the government had a moral responsibility to participate in light of the testing, adding that her country is a producer of uranium used for atomic bombs.

Australia, like Japan, operates under the U.S. nuclear umbrella.

Meanwhile, Mexico's Ambassador to the United Nations in Geneva, Jorge Lomonaco, whose country -- along with Austria, Brazil, Ireland, Nigeria and South Africa -- has led the treaty efforts, said the survivors' remarks were invaluable to the conference.

"It was incredibly moving and a very important reminder of why we are here," he told Kyodo News. "We are here for them and because of them and we owe it to them."

Canadian Member of Parliament, Linda Duncan, who was attending the conference as a co-chair of Parliamentarians for Nuclear Disarmament, was particularly struck by Thurlow's speech.

"I think it is pretty clear that the most powerful voice we have heard over these two days is hers," she said. Duncan also expressed disappointment in her country for not participating and said she has asked Thurlow, who lives in Canada, to meet with interested politicians in the near future.

The first session of the negotiations ends Friday and a second segment will again be held in New York beginning in mid-June with the hope that a treaty will be hammered out by July.

Not forgotten - At least not by everybody

April 1, 2017

Mainichi photo page showing Hiroshima A-bomb aftermath draws attention at U.N.

<http://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20170401/p2a/00m/0na/010000c>

NEW YORK -- The Mainichi Shimbun's flyers for its special "Hiroshima Atomic-Bombing Archives" page on The Mainichi website drew attention at the United Nations headquarters here as the first round of negotiations on a treaty to ban nuclear weapons wrapped up on March 31.

- **【Related】** Hiroshima Atomic-Bombing Archives (Part 1)
- **【Related】** Locations of late Mainichi reporter's shots of post-A-bomb Hiroshima identified

The Mainichi launched the special page in March this year, featuring pictures of Hiroshima taken by Mainichi Shimbun reporter Yukio Kunihiro three days after the United States dropped an atomic bomb on the city on Aug. 6, 1945. The special page pinpoints the locations where Kunihiro took the photos with a map showing the routes he took. More photos will be added in May.

Mainichi Shimbun staff distributed flyers introducing the special page at the U.N. headquarters as talks to ban nuclear weapons were underway there, and participants including a Uganda government delegate expressed an interest. In connection with the atomic bombing, the delegate said that stories by atomic bomb survivors, or "hibakusha," were moving.

Word 'hibakusha' should be in nuke ban treaty preamble: Austrian U.N. delegate

<http://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20170401/p2a/00m/0na/017000c>

April 1, 2017 (Mainichi Japan)

Ambassador Thomas Hajnoczi (Mainichi)

NEW YORK -- The permanent representative of Austria to the United Nations in Geneva has told the Mainichi Shimbun he hopes a treaty on the nuclear weapons ban being negotiated at the U.N. headquarters here will include the term "hibakusha" -- a Japanese word for those exposed to radiation.

- **【Related】** A-bomb survivor expresses hope in nuclear weapons ban treaty, raps Japanese gov't
- **【Related】** Hibakusha 'heartbroken' over Japan's opposition to nuke ban treaty
- **【Related】** Address by hibakusha Toshiki Fujimori at U.N. conference to ban nuclear weapons

Ambassador Thomas Hajnoczi, who played a leading role in five days of international negotiations between March 27 and 31, told the Mainichi that he is lobbying other participating countries to push for the addition of "hibakusha" in the treaty's preamble, and said he believes the word will indeed be included since no countries are opposed to the idea.

The term "hibakusha" used here is not just referring to survivors of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki atomic bombings, but those who were exposed to radiation from nuclear tests around the world.

The Austrian representative emphasized during a meeting on March 31 that articles on support measures for the victims of nuclear blasts should be included in the treaty since it will focus on human rights issues derived from nuclear weapons.

He also touched on the speeches made by atomic bombing survivors invited to the talks during the March 28 meeting and said he was moved by them. He argued that in the preamble, it is important to refer to suffering that the victims of nuclear explosions have been going through, a central part of the treaty.

Toshiki Fujimori, assistant secretary general of the Japan Confederation of Atomic and Hydrogen Bomb Sufferers Organizations, who was exposed to the atomic bomb in Hiroshima, told the U.N. meeting on March 27 that the treaty must reflect the calls of hibakusha "in express terms so that the world makes remarkable progress toward nuclear weapons abolition."

Another hibakusha from the Hiroshima bombing, Setsuko Thurlow, who now lives in Canada, also made an address during the meeting, saying that she wanted the world to feel the souls of those who died in the two bombings.

First round of UN talks ends on hopeful note

April 1, 2017

1st round of nuke ban treaty negotiations ends on high note

<http://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20170401/p2g/00m/0dm/032000c>

NEW YORK (Kyodo) -- The first session of the negotiations to ban nuclear weapons ended on Friday at the United Nations with diplomats and activists agreeing that the conference went beyond expectations and the goal of realizing the first-ever treaty of its kind can be reached in July.

"This week has been a resounding success, first and foremost because it did what it meant to do," said Mexico's Ambassador to the United Nations in Geneva, Jorge Lomonaco, at a side event just before the conference closed.

Mexico has played an instrumental role, along with Austria, Brazil, Ireland, Nigeria and South Africa in leading the efforts to ban nuclear weapons and in pressing for the adoption of a U.N. General Assembly resolution last year that set out the schedule for two conferences to be held in New York. The aim is to see a landmark treaty banning nuclear weapons realized for the first time ever.

The first of the sessions ended Friday after five days and a second is to begin in mid-June and conclude by July 7.

"We went beyond those expectations," Lomonaco added, noting how diplomats provided the president of the conference with ideas and proposals that will be considered in the production of a draft so that negotiations can move forward.

More than 115 countries participated in the conference with over 220 representatives from civil society, including atomic bomb victims from Hiroshima, according to Elayne Whyte Gomez, Costa Rican ambassador in Geneva, who is also president of the conference.

Absent from the discussions was Japan, which says it aspires to a nuclear-weapon-free world but relies on U.S. nuclear deterrence for protection. After delivering a speech on Monday, Japan's disarmament ambassador Nobushige Takamizawa announced his country would not participate in the talks.

The United States also staged a press conference, along with about 20 of its allies, to protest the start of the New York process.

The other nuclear weapon states -- Britain, China, France and Russia -- also did not attend, yet despite their absence many viewed the start of the negotiations as a success.

"As president, I feel very much satisfied with the progress achieved so far," Gomez told reporters at a press conference Thursday. "It makes me be very hopeful and optimistic that the completion of an effective and legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons by July 7 is an achievable goal."

On Friday, she said she is aiming to provide a draft to the delegates between the second half of May and the beginning of June, ahead of the next New York meeting.

She also pointed to the importance of the testimonies of Hiroshima atomic bomb survivors, Toshiki Fujimori and Setsuko Thurlow, as well as Sue Coleman Haseldine, an Australian Aboriginal survivor of nuclear tests, who spoke at the conference.

Their stories, she said have "reminded all delegates of the catastrophic humanitarian impact of any use of nuclear weapons" and "reaffirmed the commitment of all delegations to work toward a very positive result."

During the sessions, some raised the idea of mentioning the victims in the final document but that remains to be seen.

"I think there is general agreement in the room that we have to recognize the rights of the victims and survivors but there is disagreement on how that should be shaped," Beatrice Fihn, executive director of the International Coalition to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, told Kyodo News.

Fihn said the mention of the survivors raises concerns about whether victims, for example, could seek out compensation in courts or whether it might only apply to future victims or what types of general obligations there are to provide assistance and support.

She also agreed that the talks so far have been positive.

"Based on this week, we have a really good chance of adopting a strong treaty in July...but it is going to require a lot of work to get there."

April 1, 2017

Head of nuclear arms ban talks aims to draft treaty next month

<http://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20170401/p2a/00m/0na/013000c>

NEW YORK -- The president of a conference on establishing a convention to outlaw nuclear weapons said she aims to draw up a draft of the convention next month and have it adopted in July.

- **【Related】** Mainichi photo page showing Hiroshima A-bomb aftermath draws attention at U.N.
- **【Related】** Japan says it will not take part in nuclear ban treaty talks without nuclear powers
- **【Related】** Anti-nuke NGO hands paper cranes to delegates at U.N. conference

The five-day first round of the conference, which was held at the United Nations headquarters in New York, ended on March 31.

Over 100 countries are participating in the conference, and many of them have expressed hope that a treaty to outlaw the use, production, possession, stockpiling and experiments of nuclear arms will be concluded.

Elayne Whyte Gomez, Costa Rican ambassador to the U.N. in Geneva and president of the conference, will draw up a draft while coordinating views among participating countries, and is expected to present the draft to the participating states as early as late May.

Whyte also said a meeting will be held in Geneva by June to exchange opinions between the countries involved, and she aims to have it adopted by the end of the second round of the conference to be held from June 15 to July 7.

About 40 countries, including the five major nuclear states -- the United States, Britain, France, Russia and China -- and NATO members and others that rely on the U.S. nuclear umbrella, are opposed to a treaty that would ban nuclear arms and are not participating in the conference.

Japanese disarmament ambassador Nobushige Takamizawa announced in a speech at the outset of the conference on March 27 that Tokyo would not participate in the talks.

A treaty to ban nuclear weapons

April 1, 2017

A treaty to ban nuclear weapons

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2017/04/01/editorials/treaty-ban-nuclear-weapons/#.WN-4jGekKos>

As talks began last week at the United Nations on a treaty that would outlaw nuclear weapons, Japan announced that it will not take part in the negotiations — which is most regrettable. The move could be taken as an indication that Japan is giving up its moral responsibility as the world's sole victim of nuclear attacks to play a proactive role in global efforts to eliminate nuclear weapons, and it will come as a great disappointment to people, including survivors of the 1945 atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and non-nuclear states. At the very least the government needs to explain in concrete terms how it otherwise intends to work toward its stated goal of making the world free of nuclear arms.

Austria, Brazil, Ireland, Mexico, South Africa and Sweden took the initiative in submitting to the U.N. a resolution calling for starting talks on such a treaty. Despite opposition from the United States and other nuclear weapon powers, the U.N. General Assembly in December adopted the resolution with 113 member states voting for it, 35 countries voting against and 13 others, including China, abstaining from voting. Proponents of the talks on such a treaty cited the International Court of Justice's 1996 advisory opinion that "the threat or use of nuclear weapons would generally be contrary to the rules of international law applicable in armed conflict, and in particular the principles and rules of humanitarian law." The first round of the talks took place last week and the second round is set to be held from mid-June to early July. In addition to the nations possessing nuclear arms — the U.S., Russia, Britain, France, China, India, Pakistan, Israel and North Korea, Japan and most members of NATO also oppose the negotiations on the treaty because they are under the U.S. nuclear umbrella. The U.S. administration of President Donald Trump is reported to have expressed strong opposition to its allies participating in the U.N. talks. In explaining its position, Japan said if the negotiations on a nuclear arms ban treaty proceed without the participation of the nuclear weapon powers, a schism would deepen within the international community, making it difficult for Tokyo to take part in the talks "in a constructive manner and in good faith." It also said that a pragmatic viewpoint of the issue is indispensable given that the world faces a serious security threat as exemplified by North Korea's nuclear tests and ballistic missile launches, and that efforts toward nuclear weapons reduction should be pushed in a gradual manner while avoiding a division between nuclear weapon powers and non-nuclear weapon states.

If the Japanese government says so, it needs to first explain in specific terms how it can help the international community carry out step-by-step reduction of nuclear weapons in a manner that will eventually lead to their total elimination, and then take concrete steps to accomplish the goal. It has all the more duty to do that because it declared that it would pursue pragmatic and effective disarmament measures and would work to create a security environment conducive to the elimination of nuclear weapons.

Countries opposing a nuclear arms ban treaty hold that such an accord would impede efforts for nuclear reduction under the U.N. Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). They must understand that behind the push for the negotiations for the nuclear arms ban treaty is the frustration felt among many non-nuclear weapons nations over the lack of progress in efforts under the NPT regime. They also believe that the nuclear weapons states and some members of the international community

have underrated the risks posed by nuclear weapons and that nuclear weapons constitute a destabilizing factor in the world's security environment.

Opponents to a ban on nuclear weapons say a treaty outlawing nuclear weapons without the participation of nuclear weapons powers would bring about no tangible results to reduce or eliminate nuclear weapons. But Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida declared that Japan's position has been and will be consistent, and that there is no contradiction between its nonparticipation in the U.N. talks and its intent to work toward elimination of nuclear weapons.

To prove the integrity of his words, Japan needs to seriously consider ways to help the 115 countries taking part in the negotiations work out flexible provisions that might induce nuclear weapons states to join the treaty, and then take concrete actions in accordance with its idea.

Students for a world free of nuclear weapons

April 3, 2017

Intl. students on world free of nuclear weapons

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20170403_18/

High school students from Japan, the United States and Russia gathered in Nagasaki to discuss ways to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons.

The 3-day annual conference is organized by a US institute, and opened on Monday in the atomic-bombed city for the first time.

The Japanese participants include students from Hiroshima. The city was also devastated by an atomic bomb in 1945.

Students from Kwassui High School in Nagasaki spoke about the current global situation surrounding nuclear weapons. They reported their activities to push for the abolition of nuclear arms, such as signature-collecting drives.

They also explained how they are preserving the stories of atomic bomb survivors using digital technologies.

Students from the US and Russia said nuclear disarmament should be pursued step by step. They called for strengthening monitoring and arms reduction efforts.

They also proposed that peace education programs be taught to future generations as a step to prevent the spread of weapons of mass destruction.

Kwassui student Kokoro Tanaka said she was nervous while speaking to the audience, but thinks she was able to convey her message. She said she wants to learn many things from the participants' different

viewpoints.

Nuclear reduction experts are scheduled to join a symposium.

Korea's threat?

April 5, 2017

Will nuclear history repeat itself in Korea?

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2017/04/05/commentary/world-commentary/will-nuclear-history-repeat-korea/>

by Michael Mandelbaum

WASHINGTON – As Chinese President Xi Jinping's first summit with U.S. President Donald Trump takes place at Trump's luxurious Florida estate Mar-a-Lago, at least part of the discussion will invariably focus on one of the world's most impoverished places: North Korea. Despite more than two decades of on-again, off-again negotiations, North Korea's nuclear weapons program is pushing the world toward a strategic watershed much like the one that the West faced 60 years ago, when the United States and the Soviet Union faced off against each other in Europe.

The U.S. and its allies successfully navigated the challenge of Europe in the 20th century without war. But to achieve comparable success in East Asia today, Trump must persuade Xi to adopt a different policy toward North Korea.

When the U.S. and the Soviet Union became rivals after World War II, each had a way of deterring the other from attacking. The Soviet Union had — or was widely believed to have — a large advantage in non-nuclear forces, which the Kremlin could use to conquer Western Europe. The U.S., with its monopoly on nuclear weapons, could launch a nuclear strike from Europe on the Soviet homeland.

Then, in 1957, the launch of Sputnik made it clear that the Soviet Union would soon be able to deliver a nuclear strike on the U.S. mainland, calling into question the effectiveness of American deterrence. Was it credible that, in response to an attack on Western Europe, the U.S. would make war on the Soviet Union, thus inviting a nuclear attack on its own territory? America and its allies had four possible solutions to this novel and dangerous problem: preemption, defense, proliferation, and deterrence.

Preemption — an attack on the Soviet Union's nuclear weapons — would have started World War III, a distinctly unappealing prospect. And, as the Soviet nuclear arsenal grew, the U.S. government ruled out defense against a missile attack: because it could not deflect every incoming nuclear explosive, it would be safer if neither side tried to build ballistic missile defenses. U.S. President Richard Nixon's administration therefore negotiated and signed the 1972 Soviet-American Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty, effectively banning such systems.

The third option, acquisition of nuclear armaments by potentially threatened countries, was based on the assumption that a government would be willing to use such weapons to defend its own country, if not another one. French President Charles de Gaulle invoked this logic to justify his country's nuclear weapons program, although he also had other reasons for wanting France to join the nuclear "club." By

this logic, however, West Germany, too, needed a nuclear arsenal; and, given Germany's 20th-century history, no one, least of all the Germans, desired such an outcome.

So the West opted to reinforce the status quo, with the U.S. seeking to enhance the credibility of its policy of deterrence in Europe by stating, publicly and frequently, that it would indeed defend its allies, despite the risk that this would lead to an attack on its own territory. The U.S. backed up its stance by deploying nuclear weapons on the European continent, and by stationing troops on the front lines in Germany as a "trip-wire": an attack there would trigger U.S. participation in any war the communist side might begin. This strategy worked: for whatever combination of reasons, the Soviet Union never launched a westward attack of any kind.

Six decades later, a similar challenge looms on the Korean Peninsula. Since the end of the Korean War in 1953, a U.S. military presence has helped deter a North Korean attack on the South, while the communist North has deterred the U.S. as well: its massive artillery deployments along the demilitarized zone dividing the peninsula could devastate South Korea's capital, Seoul, with its 10 million people, in retaliation for any U.S. attack.

North Korea's nuclear weapons program threatens to upset that balance, by giving its regime the capacity, through the long-range ballistic missiles it is testing, to strike the West Coast of the U.S., thereby raising a new version of an old question: would the U.S. risk Los Angeles to protect Seoul? The U.S. and its Asian allies have the same four options as the Atlantic Alliance had 60 years ago.

They can attempt to live with North Korean long-range nuclear missiles, relying on deterrence. Peace, and the safety of millions of Americans, would then depend on the prudence and rationality of North Korea's 33-year-old dictator, Kim Jong Un, a young man with a taste for grotesque executions of family members and close associates.

In the past, such an outcome has seemed unacceptable to U.S. national security experts. In June 2006, William Perry, a former defense secretary, and Ashton Carter, a future one, argued in *The Washington Post* that if North Korea deployed on its territory a nuclear-armed missile capable of hitting the U.S., the U.S. should attack and destroy it.

But, like the status quo, attacking the North's nuclear arsenal would carry enormous risks. Such an attack would likely trigger a second Korean War. The North would surely lose, and the regime would collapse, but probably not until it inflicted terrible damage on South Korea, and perhaps also on Japan.

Having withdrawn from the ABM Treaty, the U.S. has already begun to deploy missile-defense systems, with the hope of defeating a small-scale nuclear assault (though not a massive attack of the kind Russia could launch). This option, too, carries grave risks. As the North Korean nuclear arsenal grows, the effectiveness of missile defense will diminish. Even one nuclear explosion in the U.S., South Korea, or Japan would be a catastrophe.

If East Asian countries come to doubt the credibility of the U.S. commitment to their defense — and Trump has made clear his reservations about U.S. alliances — they can build their own nuclear weapons, as France did. Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan are certainly capable of doing so rapidly.

But an East Asia in which several countries possessed nuclear weapons would not necessarily be stable. Unlike Europe during the Cold War, it would have several nuclear powers, not just two; and some of them would lack the capacity for "assured destruction" — that is, the ability to absorb a nuclear strike and still inflict devastating damage on the attacker.

Without such a capacity, a nuclear-armed country has a much greater incentive than the U.S. and the Soviet Union did to launch a first strike if it suspects that it will be attacked.

Deterrence, preemption, defense, and proliferation: none of the four possible responses to the progress of the North Korean nuclear program inspires confidence. But an important difference between 21st-

century East Asia and 20th-century Europe creates a chance to avoid all four: China is in a position to exert powerful pressure on the source of the nuclear threat.

Almost all of North Korea's food and fuel comes from neighboring China. But, despite its opposition to North Korea's nuclear weapons program and its lack of enthusiasm for the Kim dynasty, the Chinese government has thus far refrained from applying pressure by threatening to sever the North's lifeline. China's bigger fear is the collapse of the Kim regime, which would send a wave of unwanted refugees across its border and could create a new and unwanted neighbor: a reunified Korean state allied with the U.S.

While the Chinese may have good reasons to prefer the status quo on the Korean Peninsula, continuing to indulge the North Korean leadership's nuclear ambitions is a risky option. China could find itself surrounded by unfriendly nuclear-armed states, or with a nasty war on its border, or perhaps both. Trump should emphasize that point to Xi. At the very least, North Korea's nuclear progress, unless China acts to stop it, will make East Asia a far more dangerous place for everyone, including the Chinese themselves.

Mark Twain observed that everybody talks about the weather, but nobody does anything about it. That has been true of North Korea's nuclear weapons program for almost a quarter-century. It may not be true for much longer.

Michael Mandelbaum is a professor emeritus of American foreign policy at The Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies and the author of "Mission Failure: America and the World in the Post-Cold War Era." © Project Syndicate, 2017

Hibakusha Toshiki Fujimori at the UN

April 8, 2017

Hibakusha's effort at U.N. nuke ban treaty conference applauded

<https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20170408/p2a/00m/0na/020000c>

NEW YORK -- As the first United Nations (U.N.) conference on negotiating a treaty designed to ban nuclear weapons finished here on March 31, it is worth mentioning the efforts of hibakusha (A-bomb survivor) Toshiki Fujimori, who was one of the speakers at the conference.

- **【Related】** Hibakusha 'heartbroken' over Japan's opposition to nuke ban treaty
- **【Related】** Address by hibakusha Toshiki Fujimori at U.N. conference to ban nuclear weapons
- **【Related】** Japan says it will not take part in nuclear ban treaty talks without nuclear powers

Fujimori, 73, who now lives in the city of Chino in Nagano Prefecture, was only 16 months old when the atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima in August 1945. Seven decades later, he addressed this anti-nuclear weapon delegation at the U.N. headquarters in New York -- as deputy secretary-general of the Japan Confederation of A- and H-Bomb Sufferers Organizations, and also as a hibakusha.

By speaking at this conference on March 27, Fujimori became the third hibakusha -- following Nagasaki A-bomb survivors Senji Yamaguchi and Terumi Tanaka -- to bear testimony at the U.N. General Assembly hall. However, there was added significance this time because it was the first time for a hibakusha to give testimony at a U.N. gathering that was specifically aimed toward the abolition of nuclear weapons. His

eight-minute speech, in which he stated, "Nobody, in any country, deserves seeing the same hell on earth again," was met with rapturous applause from those in the audience.

During the five-day conference, Fujimori found time to speak to delegates from numerous countries, and emphasized the necessity of sealing a treaty banning nuclear weapons.

The drive toward trying to form a treaty has been gathering speed over the past few years. In 2010, the International Committee of the Red Cross pointed out the "inhumane nature of nuclear weapons." In addition, taking into account the fact that the average age of hibakusha is over 80 years old, there is a sense of urgency concerning the need to form a treaty.

Haruko Moritaki, 78, whose father Ichiro Moritaki campaigned for the abolition of hydrogen and atomic bombs in Hiroshima after World War II, has been stressing the need to form a treaty abolishing nuclear weapons for about 10 years now. However, her campaign hit a snag when her friends criticized her vision as "unrealistic."

In response to North Korea's recent firing of ballistic missiles on April 5 and nuclear program, Moritaki states, "North Korea pursues nuclear weapons in order to antagonize countries that possess nuclear weapons. However, if a treaty banning nuclear weapons is sealed, then I think that the threat will be reduced by depriving nuclear powers of the pretext for maintaining such weapons."

At the close of the recent U.N. conference in New York, conference president Elayne Whyte Gomez, from Costa Rica, said, "I believe that we can draw up a treaty by July 7," which has given hope to people like Fujimori, who said: "This is not perfect, but it is a step in the right direction."

Nuclear deal: "Nobody seems to be trying very hard"

April 8, 2017

The nuclear journey from Hiroshima to Pyongyang

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2017/04/08/commentary/nuclear-journey-hiroshima-pyongyang/>

by Jeff Kingston

Barack Obama's bold pledge in Prague back in 2009 to realize a nuclear-free world resonated powerfully in Japan and culminated in his 2016 visit to Hiroshima.

There, the U.S. president said: "We come to mourn the dead, including over 100,000 Japanese men, women and children, thousands of Koreans, a dozen Americans held prisoner. Their souls speak to us. They ask us to look inward, to take stock of who we are and what we might become." In his view, Hiroshima represents an awakening to the need for a moral revolution.

But Obama also justified continued possession of nuclear weapons: "We may not be able to eliminate man's capacity to do evil, so nations and the alliances that we form must possess the means to defend ourselves. But among those nations like my own that hold nuclear stockpiles, we must have the courage to escape the logic of fear and pursue a world without them."

The logic of fear remains resilient. Moreover, there don't appear to be any world leaders inclined to promote a progressive moral revolution. In our world of illiberal democracies, the concept of a moral

revolution has been hijacked by strongmen favoring jingoistic agendas, like India's Narendra Modi and Turkey's Recep Tayyip Erdogan. Readers interested in the rise of such strongmen should read Basharat Peer's excellent new work "A Question of Order: India, Turkey and the Return of the Strongmen." This comparative study in atavism shreds hopes for the kind of moral revolution that Obama called for. Across the globe, populists are whipping up fears and primordial instincts in the service of their reactionary agendas. Making nations great again apparently involves a remorseless, unapologetic militant nationalism.

In this unfavorable context for progressive idealism, Japan's hibakusha are not buying their government's capitulation on negotiations to ban nuclear weapons. Toshiki Fujimori, assistant secretary general of the Japan Confederation of Atomic and Hydrogen Bomb Sufferers Organizations (Nihon Hidankyo) testified on March 27 at the United Nations conference in New York, where representatives of 115 countries had gathered to negotiate a legally binding ban on nuclear weapons. Nihon Hidankyo was established in 1956 and has been campaigning ever since to ensure there will be no more hibakusha, lending its unique moral authority to the cause of banning the bomb.

Fujimori, who was 16 months old on Aug. 6, 1945, when the atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, said: "My fourth-eldest sister was 13 years old and was in her first year of an all-girls junior high school. She was around 400 meters from the hypocenter when the bomb was dropped. Together with her teachers and other students, my sister was there to demolish houses to create fire-safe areas against air raids.

"All 676 of them, including my sister, were killed instantly through direct exposure to radiation, the heat, and the blast from the bomb. It is said that altogether in the city of Hiroshima, 8,400 students in the first and second year of junior high schools were being mobilized for similar purposes." He added, "Nobody, in any country, deserves to see the same hell on Earth again."

Fujimori lamented: "Nuclear-weapon states and their allied nuclear-dependent states are against concluding a treaty to abolish nuclear weapons. Despite being the only country in the world that experienced the wartime use of nuclear weapons, the Japanese government voted against established this negotiating conference."

The moral revolution seems further away than ever with Abe's abnegation of Japan's unique position regarding nuclear weapons. Tokyo's logic is that as long as it depends on the U.S. nuclear umbrella, it can't really have it both ways. And that umbrella is seen to be ever more necessary in light of North Korea's intensified nuclear weapons program — which has entailed more than 20 missile tests over the past year and a total of five nuclear tests over the past decade, with another apparently imminent.

Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida explained that outlawing nuclear weapons at a gathering where none of the nations that possess such weapons are in attendance doesn't make sense. He said Japan needs to be pragmatic, warning that the talks "could also further deepen the rift between nuclear and nonnuclear weapons states." While Tokyo gives lip service to a world free of nuclear weapons, it remains vague as to how it hopes to reach that goal, fearful of alienating Washington. Preserving harmony in the alliance trumps what is dismissed as a quixotic campaign to outlaw weapons that pose an existential threat to humanity.

On March 30, Hiroshi Imazu, chair of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party's Research Commission on Security, presented a report to Prime Minister Shinzo Abe that advocates acquiring the capacity for preemptive strikes on North Korean missile sites.

"Japan can't just wait until it's destroyed," Imazu said. "It's legally possible for Japan to strike an enemy base that's launching a missile at us, but we don't have the equipment or capability." Understood, but how can Japan track Pyongyang's fast-moving mobile launchers?

Last September, North Korea conducted its fifth nuclear detonation, the third since Kim Jong Un took over the country's leadership in December 2011. As nuclear weapons expert Siegfried Hecker noted on the website 38 North, "Five tests conducted over a 10-year period, sufficiently spaced that the test results can inform the next test, are deeply alarming."

He added: "Left unchecked, Pyongyang will likely develop the capability to reach the continental United States with a nuclear-tipped missile in a decade or so. The likely ability of the DPRK (Democratic People's Republic of North Korea) to put nuclear weapons on target anywhere in South Korea and Japan, and even on some U.S. assets in the Pacific, greatly complicates the regional military picture. That situation would be exacerbated if Pyongyang decides to field tactical nuclear weapons."

The LDP has long wanted to shed the defensive-only security posture that has prevailed over the past seven decades, and in the spirit of not letting a crisis go to waste, the Abe government is moving toward doing so.

Acting on Imazu's proposal would mean a significant increase in Japan's military spending, and much of that would go toward purchases from American defense companies. Given U.S. President Donald Trump's harumphing about trade deficits, upgrading Japan ballistic missile defense systems and purchases of cruise missiles might be timely multipurpose insurance.

Pyongyang's nuclear weapons program is triggering a regional arms race where the logic suggests further proliferation, annihilation or both. Isn't it time to sit down with Kim Jong Un and try to figure out some better scenarios?

Maybe there is no good deal waiting to be made, but nobody seems to be trying very hard to make one. Jeff Kingston is the director of Asian Studies, Temple University Japan.

Another test from North Korea?

April 13, 2017

Activity observed at Korea's nuclear test site

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20170413_21/

US researchers say new satellite images show continued activity near North Korea's nuclear test site.

The Johns Hopkins University study group 38 North posted the analysis of the images taken on Wednesday of the Punggye-ri Nuclear Test Site, in the country's northeast.

Researchers say one of the photos shows what appears to be a small vehicle or trailer immediately outside the site's North Portal, and that water flow out of the entrance has decreased in the past 10 days.

Another photo shows personnel in formation in courtyards of a main administrative area.

South Korea's Foreign Minister Yun Byung-se says full preparations are in place as North Korea this month may attempt major strategic provocations such as nuclear testing or an intercontinental ballistic

missile launch.

Speaking before the country's National Assembly on Thursday, Yun stressed that South Korea is closely exchanging information and consulting with the US over the North's moves.

He also said China has indicated the need to impose new sanctions if North Korea conducts another nuclear test.

See also : <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2017/04/13/asia-pacific/amid-heightened-tensions-north-korean-nuclear-test-site-primed-ready-report-says/>

Can nuclear weapons offer an "insurance" policy?

A European Nuclear Weapon Alliance?

https://www.nytimes.com/2017/03/15/opinion/a-european-nuclear-program.html?_r=4

MARCH 15, 2017

To the Editor:

Those in Europe arguing in favor of a continental nuclear arsenal ("Fearing U.S. Withdrawal, Europe Considers Its Own Nuclear Deterrent," The Interpreter, March 7) are heavy on politics, but glaringly light on law and humanity.

Some Western nations like to squarely blame North Korea's 2003 withdrawal from the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty or Iran's program to enrich nuclear fuel for undermining the global nonproliferation regime. Without condoning the actions of North Korea or Iran, it is still plain to see that the creation of a European nuclear weapon alliance would violate both the spirit and the letter of the Nonproliferation Treaty.

Any use of even "smaller, shorter-range tactical weapons" would have catastrophic humanitarian consequences.

The majority of the world's nations will gather at the United Nations in New York at the end of March to begin negotiating a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons. Such a treaty is urgently needed and long overdue.

Those advocating European nuclear weapons say they are seeking an "insurance policy." **Insurance policies pay out only when something goes wrong, which, in the realm of nuclear weapons, means it's too late.** The only way to ensure that nuclear weapons are never used is to abolish them. The world will begin an important step toward that goal this month.

RICK WAYMAN

SANTA BARBARA, CALIF.

The writer is director of programs for the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation.

Testing (inert) nuclear bombs over Nevada desert

April 15, 2017

Inert version of upgraded U.S. nuclear bomb passes first test

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2017/04/15/world/inert-version-upgraded-u-s-nuclear-bomb-passes-first-test/>

AP

NEW MEXICO – Scientists at Sandia National Laboratories are claiming success with the first in a new series of test flights involving an upgraded version of a nuclear bomb that has been part of the U.S. arsenal for decades.

Work on the B61-12 has been ongoing for years, and government officials say the latest tests using mock versions of the bomb will be vital to the refurbishing effort.

An F-16 from Nellis Air Force Base dropped an inert version of the weapon **over the Nevada desert** last month to test its nonnuclear functions as well as the plane's ability to carry the bomb.

With a mere puff of dust, the mock bomb landed in a dry lake bed at the Tonopah Test Range.

"It's great to see things all come together: the weapon design, the test preparation, the aircraft, the range and the people who made it happen," Anna Schauer, director of Sandia's Stockpile Resource Center, said in a statement.

Scientists are planning to spend months analyzing the data gathered from the test.

Tracking telescopes, remote cameras and other instruments at the test range recorded information on the reliability, accuracy and performance of the weapon under conditions that were meant to replicate real-world operations.

More test flights are planned over the next three years, and officials with the National Nuclear Security Administration said the first production unit of the B61-12 — developed under what is called the Life Extension Program — is scheduled to be completed in 2020.

The B61-12 consolidates and replaces four older versions in the nation's nuclear arsenal. It's outfitted with a new tail-kit assembly and other hardware.

The weapon is much different than the nonnuclear "mother of all bombs" used in Afghanistan this past week to attack an Islamic State stronghold near the Pakistani border. The Massive Ordnance Air Blast bomb, or MOAB, isn't designed to penetrate like the B61-12 but rather create a large blast over the surface and it has to be ferried by a much larger plane given its size.

In Nevada, it took two passes before the pilot could drop the mock B61-12. A herd of wild horses had to be chased away on the first go-around.

With the run commencing, people gathered on balconies at the range despite knowing they would see only dust rising from the target miles away. A video feed showed the test bomb fall through the air after being released by the F-16.

Officials said it left behind a rather neat hole. Crews were able to dig the mock weapon out of the dirt so it could be packed up and returned to Albuquerque for further study.

Yanagisawa: Japan & North Korea

April 20, 2017

For its own safety, Japan must seek peaceful path to N. Korea nuclear problem solution

The following is a summary of comments by Kyoji Yanagisawa, a former assistant to the deputy chief Cabinet secretary, regarding the rising tensions on the Korean Peninsula.

- **【Related】** U.S. tells North Korea: We don't want a fight, don't start one
- **【Related】** U.S. VP Pence says to North Korea: 'The sword stands ready'
- **【Related】** U.S. aircraft carrier to reach waters near N. Korea next week

* * * * *

What is most worrying about the administration of U.S. President Donald Trump is that the goal that the administration aims to achieve through its use of force remains unclear.

Even if we accept that the cruise missile strike on a Syrian government airbase was intended as a punishment for the Assad regime's use of chemical weapons, it did nothing to help either end the civil war or protect human rights in that country. On North Korea, too, we cannot see if the United States is trying to stop the North's regime from conducting another nuclear weapons test, or what the Trump administration will do if there is such a test.

Right now, it is not North Korea but the U.S. that is dealing in brinksmanship diplomacy, attempting to extract desired concessions from its rivals by menacing them with the threat of war. However, for brinksmanship to work, two conditions must be in place. One, there must be some prospect that the country on the receiving end will indeed make concessions; and two, there must be some idea of what will result from military action taken in cases where no concessions were made. There are no examples of successful military force-first diplomatic gambits without looking ahead to the potential outcomes.

A U.S. Navy strike group led by the Nimitz-class USS Carl Vinson aircraft carrier is steaming for the waters off the Korean Peninsula. I cannot call this anything else but an empty action, and therefore a dangerous action. The reason North Korea is clinging to its nuclear program is because it feels threatened by U.S. military power. If the Carl Vinson gets a touch too close it would only feed North Korean fears and, should the North feel backed into a corner, perhaps provide the regime a reason for a pre-emptive strike. And if that happens, the targets would most likely be U.S. bases in South Korea and Japan.

There are some outstanding issues between Japan and North Korea, including the latter's abduction of Japanese citizens. However, there is no bilateral problem so severe as to lead to war. Nevertheless, should mutual distrust between the U.S. and North Korea over Pyongyang's nuclear program lead to an armed conflict, Japan and South Korea would be sucked into the conflict because both nations host U.S. bases. It is harmful for Japan to so easily back the new U.S. emphasis on displays of force. There is apparently a plan for Maritime Self-Defense Force (MSDF) vessels to conduct joint exercises with the Carl Vinson. But if the MSDF undertakes these drills in highly charged circumstances, Japan will in effect be declaring its active participation in the intimidation of North Korea. What will Japan do if the North Korean problem explodes? Japan should stick to its strictly defense-oriented policy.

First and foremost, Japan must consider its own strategic goals. Is it preventing missile attacks on our country? And should Japan be attacked, would it retaliate and then seek the destruction of the North Korean regime?

It is difficult to imagine that the North would now agree to give up nuclear weapons through a negotiated settlement. Thus, aiming to dismantle the North Korean regime may indeed be the only guaranteed way to force North Korea to give up its nuclear weapons. However, we then have to answer the question of how to govern North Korea with its population of more than 20 million. Considering how difficult the consequences of toppling the North's government are certain to be, regime change should not be seriously considered.

Should limited military strikes be launched on North Korea in a bid to strip the country of its nuclear capabilities, it would invite "limited" retaliation by Pyongyang if missiles deployed by the country remained intact. For the sake of its own well-being, Japan ought to have an alternate plan, a non-military plan, to drain away North Korea's fear of the United States.

The North's nuclear program is the last thing holding up its regime. If that regime is threatened militarily, it will likely cling all the tighter to its nuclear bombs. Pyongyang needs an alternative guarantee of its survival. If it cannot be prevented from building a nuclear arsenal, then it must not be given any incentive to use the weapons. While preventing the spread of nuclear arms technology and strengthening measures to block the flow of capital into North Korea, the international community should seek every opportunity for dialogue. Patience is required, especially when one side sparks a crisis. (Interviewed by Kaori Onaka, Opinion Group)

Rid world of nukes?

May 3, 2017

Delegates begin preparing review of nuclear treaty

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20170503_01/

A preparatory meeting for the 2020 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference opened on Tuesday at the UN Office in Vienna.

The delegates are sharply divided over a review of the NPT.

More than 100 non-nuclear countries have been negotiating since March to institute a new agreement that would legally ban the development, possession and use of nuclear arms.

But nuclear powers and their allies strongly oppose such a move, saying it ignores the reality of the international situation.

The Austrian representative said the delegates at NPT conferences have been repeating the same points

again and again without making any progress. He said a prohibition treaty would strengthen the NPT. Austria has been taking the initiative in the negotiations for a new agreement.

The US representative said it is important to abide by the NPT, which limits the possession of nuclear weapons, and to remove the threat of North Korea's nuclear development. The delegate argued for a realistic approach toward nuclear disarmament within the NPT framework. He indirectly criticized the proposed agreement, saying abandoning consensus might yield an illusion of progress, but not its reality, and even that illusion would quickly dissipate.

The preparatory meeting will continue through May 12th. Japan will invite experts to a meeting on nuclear disarmament it will hold this year.

Japan calls for nuclear nonproliferation efforts

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20170502_25/

Japan's Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida has called on nuclear powers and non-nuclear powers to work together toward a world without nuclear arms.

Kishida made the appeal at a preparatory meeting of the 2020 conference to review the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty in Vienna on Tuesday. He became Japan's first foreign minister to attend the meeting where most countries are represented by working-level officials.

Kishida said North Korea's nuclear and missile development is posing a real threat to the international community. He said it is a challenge to the disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation regime.

He called on North Korea to abandon its nuclear and missile programs and return to the NPT regime as soon as possible.

He suggested that the effort toward a nuclear-free world should be carried out in a realistic manner by involving both nuclear powers and non-nuclear powers. He said the severe security environment should be taken into account, including the situation in North Korea.

He also suggested that a legal framework for a world without nuclear arms should be introduced after nuclear weapons are reduced to low levels. He said the NPT framework serves as the basis for such an approach.

Kishida also expressed Japan's resolve to lead efforts to abolish nuclear weapons. He said Japan will invite experts to a meeting on nuclear disarmament it will hold this year.

Kishida proposes 'eminent persons group' to rid world of nukes

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201705030025.html>

THE ASAHI SHIMBUN

VIENNA--Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida said May 2 that Japan is prepared to serve as a “bridge” between nuclear and non-nuclear powers to push forward disarmament.

Kishida, the first Japanese foreign minister to speak before the preparatory committee for the 2020 review conference of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, added that participation of nuclear powers in discussions would be essential.

He said Japan would host a meeting of experts from both nuclear and non-nuclear nations before the end of the year to establish an “eminent persons group” to discuss nuclear disarmament.

Negotiations at the United Nations on a nuclear weapons ban treaty started without the presence of any nuclear power.

“(That) deepens the gap between nuclear and non-nuclear-weapon states,” Kishida said.

At the same time, he explained the Japanese position of working for early implementation of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) and negotiations toward a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT). Kishida said such action would “limit both qualitative and quantitative improvements of nuclear forces.” However, the stance of the United States under President Donald Trump appears to be moving toward improving its nuclear arsenal.

His predecessor, Barack Obama, tried to work toward a nuclear-free world and have the United States ratify the CTBT. That stance has taken a major shift under Trump.

Speaking at an April 28 news conference at the United Nations Office in Geneva, Robert Wood, the U.S. ambassador to the Conference on Disarmament, said Washington was undertaking a comprehensive review regarding the CTBT and FMCT, indicating the United States would take a major step back from the position under the Obama administration.

(This article was written by Ichiro Matsuo and Shohei Sasagawa.)

See also : <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2017/05/02/national/japan-calls-stronger-nuclear-non-proliferation-treaty-amid-north-korea-threat/>

Izumi Nakamitsu on nukes ban

May 5, 2017

New U.N. disarmament chief to give support for nuke ban talks

<https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20170505/p2g/00m/0in/053000c>

(Kyodo) -- Izumi Nakamitsu, the new U.N. undersecretary general and high representative for disarmament affairs, said Thursday she will throw her full support behind negotiations to ban nuclear weapons.

In an interview with Kyodo News, the 53-year-old Nakamitsu said she will pay an official visit to Hiroshima and Nagasaki this summer, if invited, with the aim of making an appeal to the international community for disarmament from the atom-bombed Japanese cities.

Nakamitsu, who assumed the new posts on Monday, gave her blessing to the view held by non-nuclear countries in favor of an international treaty to outlaw nuclear weapons that such an accord would complement the regime of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty.

She also said it is "critically important" to make a success of an NPT review conference to be held in 2020. Unlike the U.N.-backed talks on a nuclear weapons ban treaty, which began in March, the NPT review process involves major nuclear powers.

Nakamitsu said she hopes Japan, the world's sole country to have suffered nuclear attacks, will serve as a "bridge" between nuclear and non-nuclear nations.

She added that she is also keen to step in when necessary, saying, "It is my very important role to play to provide political facilitation."

Turning to North Korea's ballistic missile and nuclear development programs, Nakamitsu said they are "unacceptable to the international community."

She also pointed to the need to "think about what steps we should take toward the path of dialogue," adding the United Nations is willing to serve as an intermediary if asked by the parties concerned.

In addition to her own visit to Hiroshima and Nagasaki, she said U.N. Secretary General Antonio Guterres has started scheduling a similar trip.

Nakamitsu said the U.S. atomic bombing of the two Japanese cities in August 1945 was "the biggest incident in human history." She said she heard her father talk about the mushroom cloud he saw at the time of the nuclear attack on Nagasaki from neighboring Kumamoto Prefecture.

A native of Tokyo, Nakamitsu joined the United Nations in 1989 and has been assistant secretary general and assistant administrator at the U.N. Development Program's Crisis Response Unit since November 2014.

Previously, she served as director of the Asia and Middle East division, as well as director of the division of policy, evaluation and training with the United Nations' peacekeeping department.

Her extensive career at the international body has included posts in and out of New York, including serving under former Secretary General Kofi Annan as part of his reform team and at the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees in the former Yugoslavia, Turkey and northern Iraq.

Nakamitsu was also a professor of international relations at Hitotsubashi University in Tokyo between 2005 and 2008.

See also : <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2017/05/05/national/new-u-n-disarmament-chief-nakamitsu-backs-proposal-global-nuclear-weapons-ban/#.WQyl6tykKic>

India must confirm "no first-use" policy

May 12, 2017

Japan to end nuclear pact if India alters policy

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20170512_21/

Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida says Japan will terminate a civil nuclear cooperation pact with India if the country changes its "no first-use" policy on nuclear weapons.

Kishida made the remark on Friday in a Lower House committee session that discussed whether to approve the agreement that the prime ministers of the 2 countries signed last November.

Kishida was asked what Japan would do if India lifts its moratorium on nuclear tests and reverses its policy of not using nuclear weapons first.

The foreign minister said Japan's cooperation with India is premised on a 2008 statement by the Indian government that confirms the "no first-use" policy.

He said Japan will exercise its right to terminate the pact if the contents of the statement are changed.

The deal would allow Japan to export nuclear-related technology for peaceful purposes. It would also enable the 2 countries to exchange know-how on nuclear materials and equipment for nuclear plants.

India, which possesses nuclear weapons, has not signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Nuclear & non-nuclear nations still worlds apart

May 13, 2017

Nuclear, non-nuclear nations remain divided

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20170513_07/

Nuclear and non-nuclear nations have failed to narrow their differences over a proposed treaty that would legally ban nuclear weapons.

On Friday in Vienna, delegates ended a preparatory meeting for the 2020 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference. There was disagreement regarding the contents of a summary report on the 10 days of talks.

The write-up says delegates expressed support for negotiations that would lead to a treaty which would complement and strengthen the NPT. But nuclear and non-nuclear nations said that statement is not accurate.

The United States and France wanted the report to indicate that nuclear nations oppose the treaty.

Representatives from these countries argued that an agreement without the participation of nuclear nations would not reduce a single nuclear warhead.

Non-nuclear nations like Austria and Chile said the text should include the fact that more than 130 countries support the treaty. Those non-nuclear states believe the agreement would create momentum for the reduction of nuclear arms.

US special representative Robert Wood told reporters it will be extremely difficult for the 2 sides to bridge the gap.

Not just bragging

May 15, 2017

North Korea says new, longer-range missile can carry 'large' nuclear warhead

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2017/05/15/asia-pacific/north-korea-says-missile-launch-aimed-testing-carrying-large-nuclear-warhead/#.WRI7NtykKic>

by Jesse Johnson

Staff Writer

North Korea's apparently successful test-firing Sunday of a new intermediate-range ballistic missile points to a significant advance in the reclusive nation's goal of mastering the technology needed to hit the continental United States with a long-range, nuclear-tipped missile, experts said Monday.

The North bragged earlier Monday in a report carried by state media that the test had been aimed at verifying its capability of carrying "a large-size heavy nuclear warhead." The launch of the new missile, referred to as the Hwasong-12, was overseen by North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, the state-run Korean Central News Agency said in a dispatch.

"The test-fire was conducted at the highest angle in consideration of the security of neighboring countries," the report said, adding that it had been "aimed at verifying the tactical and technological specifications of the newly-developed ballistic rocket capable of carrying a large-size heavy nuclear warhead."

It said the missile had traveled 787 km after hitting an altitude of 2,111.5 km (1,312 miles).

In Tokyo, Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga acknowledged that the launch "indicated a certain degree of technological development," but stressed that the government was still analyzing the launch.

"Based on (our estimates), we can consider the possibility that this was a new type of ballistic missile.

"We have long said that the threat from North Korea has entered a new stage," Suga added.

On Sunday, the Defense Ministry said the missile was believed to be a "new type" that had flown for about 30 minutes, reaching an altitude of more than 2,000 km (1,245 miles). It was likely conducted at a steep "lofted" trajectory, hitting the highest-ever altitude recorded by the ministry.

Last month, the North put dozens of missiles on show during a massive military parade through central Pyongyang, including one that appeared to be the type of device launched Sunday.

"North Korea's latest successful missile test represents a level of performance never before seen from a North Korean missile," aerospace engineer John Schilling wrote Monday on the influential 38 North blog run by the U.S.-Korea Institute at Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies.

Schilling said that while the new missile's "performance doesn't quite reach ICBM standards it clearly shares a common heritage with the KN-08 ICBM," a road-mobile intercontinental ballistic missile, mock-ups of which were first displayed in 2012. That missile is believed to be under development by the North.

"This is not that missile but it might be a test bed, demonstrating technologies and systems to be used in future ICBMs," he said.

According to Schilling, the missile would have flown a distance of some 4,500 km if launched on a maximum trajectory, enabling Pyongyang "to reliably strike" U.S. sites on Guam, some 3,400 km from North Korea.

The KCNA dispatch also said the test-firing "proved to the full all the technical specifications" of that missile "and reconfirmed the reliability" of a new rocket engine "under the practical flight circumstances." David Schmerler, a researcher at the Center for Nonproliferation Studies at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies in California, said the missile may have employed an indigenously built high-powered engine that the North showed off in March. Kim called that engine test a "great event of historic significance."

The launch also "verified the homing feature of the warhead under the worst re-entry situation and accurate performance of detonation system," the KCNA report said.

This, Schmerler said, could mean that the warhead can adjust its course to hit a designated target. He also said the reference to the "large-size heavy nuclear warhead" may be an attempt by Pyongyang to convey improvements in their payload capabilities.

"I think they are trying to say this missile packs a bigger punch," Schmerler said.

In what was likely an oblique reference to the United States, the KCNA report, quoting Kim, said that the North Korean leader had "declared that the DPRK is a nuclear power worthy of the name whether some one recognizes it or not."

DPRK is the acronym for the North's formal name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

"The most perfect weapon systems in the world will never become the eternal exclusive property of the U.S.," Kim added.

The "U.S. had better see clearly whether the ballistic rockets of the DPRK pose an actual threat to it or not," the North Korean leader said.

"If the U.S. awkwardly attempts to provoke the DPRK, it will not escape from the biggest disaster in the history," Kim added, warning Washington "not to disregard or misjudge the reality that its mainland and Pacific operation region are in the DPRK's sighting range" for a strike.

Pyongyang has long sought recognition as a "legitimate nuclear weapons state," and is believed to currently possess between 10-20 atomic bombs. Some analysts say it could have an arsenal of some 100 warheads by 2020.

Washington has long resisted recognizing the country as a nuclear power, instead working to rein in Pyongyang's atomic ambitions — a challenge that has flummoxed multiple occupants of the White House. For his part, U.S. President Donald Trump has called the North's nuclear and missile programs one of Washington's top foreign policy concerns.

The latest test is likely to further complicate his push to pile "maximum pressure" on Pyongyang.

The launch is also an immediate challenge to South Korea's new president, Moon Jae-in, a liberal elected last week who — like Trump — has expressed a desire to reach out to North Korea.

Trump has vacillated between the possibility of military action against the North and negotiations with the country's leader, saying he would be "honored" to meet Kim — even labeling him a "smart cookie."

But Trump's ambassador to the United Nations, Nikki Haley, said the latest test shows Kim is "in a state of paranoia" and that Washington will "continue to tighten the screws" on his regime.

Youngshik Daniel Bong, a research fellow at Yonsei University's Institute for North Korean Studies in South Korea, said that in the short term, this launch was likely an attempt to test the resolve of the new

government in Seoul while also driving a wedge between South Korea and the U.S. over how best to approach Pyongyang prior to any Moon-Trump summit.

Bong, however, said if that was the North's intention, the missile test could prove counterproductive. "It might have forced the Moon government to decide to hold any planned initiatives to thaw the current tensions on the Korean Peninsula until there is a clear sign that North Korea will not conduct another major provocation," he said.

"The Indian threat is real"

The Indian threat is real

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1406430/indian-threat-real/>

By Ahsan Ali Zahid / Hasan Ehtisham

Published: May 11, 2017

Research carried at the Belfer Centre for Science and International Affairs by Dr Mansoor Ahmed has shown how India is expanding its unsafeguarded nuclear power programme in a three-stage plan. New Delhi has already declared construction of various types of nuclear reactors. This capacity is going to produce excess amount of fissile material, other than required for fuelling the breeder and naval reactors programmes.

Over the next decade, India will be able to supersede China, France and the UK in nuclear weapons capability to become the third behind the US and Russia.

The study postulates India is already working to install more than five fast breeder reactors which will increase its weapons-grade plutonium production capacity by 20 times to 700kg every year. Similarly, expansion in its centrifuge enrichment programme will enable it to increase production of highly enriched uranium for nuclear weapons to 160kg every year. With such an amount of weapons-grade material, India can anytime produce approximately 80 to 90 plutonium-based and 7 to 8 uranium-based nuclear weapons every year.

This study has exploded the myth that Pakistan has the world's fastest growing nuclear weapons programme. Factually, India has paced up the construction and planning of nuclear facilities to stockpile the weapons-grade material for later use in military modernisation programmes. **Several Indian analysts and policymakers are of the view that India needs a strategic force of over 300-400 nuclear weapons. So, New Delhi has deliberately kept its fast breeder reactors, and a large part of its so-called civil nuclear programme out of the safeguards and monitoring of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).** India will seek to produce many more nuclear warheads without IAEA monitoring, in order to acquire the policy of full nuclear triad.

India can produce over 2,600 weapons, while Pakistan can only produce 207. India therefore has the fastest growing nuclear programme outside safeguards among any other non-NPT nuclear states.

Lastly, the study recommended that NSG nations should advise membership criteria for non-NPT countries after “verifiable separation” through IAEA safeguards on any material or facility designated as “civilian.” Moreover, Pakistan is left with no option other than to consider India’s full potential to make nuclear weapons, including military and civilian stocks. This research fully describes the potential of Indian vertical nuclear proliferation and threat perception associated with unsafeguarded nuclear fuel cycle.

Various nuclear suppliers signed the nuclear cooperation agreements with India, on condition of peaceful use of nuclear material. Though it seems the material provided by these countries is going to be used again in weapons for the Indian military expansion doctrine. It is also probably drastically high of developing and testing a thermonuclear device for quality check in order to achieve, what India couldn’t in 1998.

Dr Bharat Karnad, a security expert at the Centre for Policy Research, believes that India has weapons grade plutonium in its possession. All India needs is it to be reprocessed, according to Dr Karnad. Several segments in India are also in favour of switching the nuclear posture to comprehensive nuclear first strike. Such developments have increased the threat perception in Islamabad, because a large chunk of the new Indian military doctrine is Pakistan centric.

Today where India stands is because of the US and the waiver it received in the form of civil nuclear deal. Analysing the economic and political gains, the US wants to give India the membership of NSG but doing so will originate the nuclear disparity and inclusion without verifiable and reliable measures, irreversibly destroying the international customs of nuclear nonproliferation, instead of strengthening it. **Both neighbours should be included in NSG criteria based, otherwise nuclear disparity will only add tensions to security challenges.**

Published in The Express Tribune, May 11th, 2017.

North Korea's direct nuclear threat to Japan

May 23, 2017

Top SDF officer warns North Korea close to mastering technology for hitting Japan with nukes

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2017/05/23/national/politics-diplomacy/top-sdf-officer-warns-north-korea-close-mastering-technology-hitting-japan-nukes/#.WSVGXNykKid>

by Reiji Yoshida

Staff Writer

Given enough time, North Korea will likely succeed in developing a nuclear warhead small enough to be mounted on a ballistic missile capable of directly striking Japan, the Self-Defense Forces’ highest-ranking officer warned Tuesday.

Facing reporters at the Foreign Correspondents' Club of Japan in Tokyo, Adm. Katsutoshi Kawano declined to comment on whether Tokyo believes the North has already acquired such a capability, but said that given more time, Pyongyang would likely master this technology, putting Japan in grave danger.

"So it is very important for the international community to keep putting pressure on the North to renounce its nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles programs," Kawano said.

Kawano's visit to the FCCJ came after Pyongyang's latest test-firing of a ballistic missile Sunday — a move that came despite mounting pressure from China and the United States to halt its provocative actions. The SDF chief also noted that the North has already developed ballistic missiles that can strike most of the Japanese archipelago.

"So the question is whether a nuclear warhead has been made small enough to be mounted (on a ballistic missile) or not. I can't say anything clearly about this yet," Kawano said. "However, we should not be optimistic" about the pace of development.

Last year, Pyongyang test-fired more than 20 ballistic missiles and conducted an unprecedented two nuclear tests.

This year, it has continued its frenetic pace of missile launches, further accelerating its weapons program. Japan has a two-layer missile-defense system consisting of Aegis destroyers equipped with SM-3 missiles and ground-based Patriot Advanced Capability-3 (PAC-3) systems.

But if the North fires a simultaneous barrage of ballistic missiles, "it would be very difficult" for Japan to intercept all of them, Kawano said.

For that reason, Tokyo now plans to introduce an upgraded version of the SM-3 missile and is building more Aegis destroyers to bolster its missile-defense capabilities, Kawano said.

Asked about the territorial dispute with China over the Japanese-controlled Senkaku Islands in the East China Sea, Kawano said the SDF remains determined to defend Japanese territory but "is calmly dealing with" Chinese coast guard ships that repeatedly approach the islets. The islands are known in China as the Diaoyus.

"We'd like to calmly react so that we will never cause an escalation" of the situation, Kawano said.

UN nuke elimination treaty

May 23, 2017

Draft of UN nuclear ban treaty released

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20170523_16/

The president of UN negotiations to legally prohibit nuclear weapons has unveiled the first draft of a treaty calling for their total elimination.

Costa Rican UN ambassador Elayne Whyte Gomez, the chair of the UN conference negotiating the ban, released the draft in Geneva on Monday.

The draft text denounces the use of nuclear weapons as a violation of international humanitarian law. It

says nations should make every effort to prevent their future use.

The text would require states to pledge never to use nuclear weapons, but also never to develop, produce, acquire, possess, stockpile, transfer or test them.

It rejects the concept of nuclear deterrence promoted by nuclear-armed countries.

Whyte Gomez noted that the treaty will give hope to survivors of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, known as "hibakusha."

The next round of negotiations on the treaty will begin on June 15th.

But the major nuclear-armed states have not participated in the talks. Nor have countries that rely on US nuclear deterrence for protection, including Japan.

Critics say the draft treaty does not include concrete measures to compel nuclear nations to take part in the negotiations.

Updating registry of bomb victims

June 9, 2017

Hiroshima updates list of atomic bomb victims

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20170609_16/

In Hiroshima, annual work began on Friday to add new names to the registry of victims of the 1945 atomic bombing.

The list includes the names of those who died in the bombing and those survived and died later. The yearly work has been continuing since 1952.

Two survivors of the bombing, 75-year-old Kazuko Ikegame and 74-year-old Nobuko Nakamoto, took charge to add new names.

Before starting the task, the 2 former city employees prayed for the victims. Then they used writing brushes to inscribe the names, ages and dates of the deaths of survivors, which were confirmed directly or through relatives during the past year.

The city says at least 2,745 new names will be added this year to 303,195 registered through last year.

Nakamoto says the effort has reminded her of the scale of the loss and the importance of conveying to people around the world that an atomic bomb should never be used again.

The work will last until August 5th, one day before the bomb was dropped. The completed records will be placed inside the cenotaph at the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park during a ceremony marking the anniversary.

Hiroshima mayor calls for ban in near future

June 16, 2017

Hiroshima mayor calls for nuclear weapons ban treaty in A-bomb survivors' lifetime

<https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20170616/p2a/00m/0na/008000c>

NEW YORK -- Japan's atomic bombing survivors' "earnest wish is to witness the prohibition of nuclear weapons in their lifetime," Hiroshima Mayor Kazumi Matsui told delegates at the second round of nuclear weapons ban treaty talks at United Nations Headquarters on June 15.

- **【Related】** UN nuke talks resume amid hopes for ban treaty
- **【Related】** Measures needed to draw nuclear states into U.N. nuke ban treaty talks
- **【Related】** Nearly 3 million signatures for nuclear abolition to be submitted to U.N.
- **【Hibakusha Series】**

Matsui furthermore called on the delegates to adopt a treaty during the current session, and to encourage nuclear powers and their allies to execute the treaty's provisions once it is signed.

"For this purpose, contracting parties to the new treaty and a wide range of civil society partners will need to join forces to conduct earnest dialogues with the nuclear-armed states and their allies to remind them that reliance on nuclear weapons is not only useless for solving the current challenges of international security, but will also endanger the survival of the entire human species," he went on.

The following is a statement by Hiroshima Mayor Kazumi Matsui on behalf of "Mayors for Peace" at the United Nations Conference to negotiate a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading towards their total elimination, made at the United Nations, June 15, 2017.

Thank you madam president for giving me the opportunity to address this United Nations Conference to negotiate a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons. I am speaking today as mayor of Hiroshima, the first city attacked by a nuclear weapon, to share the earnest wishes of "hibakusha" (A-bomb victims) for the elimination of nuclear weapons.

Seventy-two years ago, on Aug. 6, 1945, the single atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima reduced the city to ruin. Even those who barely managed to survive have been tormented by lifelong suffering. They have gone through the sorrow of losing their beloved families and friends, the long-term effects of the radiation, and constant anxiety about their health and their offspring's. Having gone through such indescribable misery, they have arrived at the unshakable conviction that "no one shall ever again suffer as we have," and continue to appeal for nuclear abolition and their fervent desire for peace to the people of the world. Their earnest wish is to witness the prohibition of nuclear weapons in their lifetime.

We sincerely welcome and thank Ambassador Whyte Gomez, president of the conference, for the inclusion of a reference to the sufferings, as well as the contributions, of the hibakusha in her excellent draft

convention text released recently. We also welcome that the draft contains provisions to allow future participation of those states currently dependent on nuclear weapons. This is in line with the proposals of Mayors for Peace, which I preside over. It is our strong hope that, through open and constructive discussions in this session on the basis of the president's draft, the resulting new treaty will become a clear-cut prohibition treaty that will also reinforce and strengthen existing legal instruments. I therefore strongly hope that such a new treaty will be adopted in this session.

Our challenge after the successful adoption of a new treaty will be clear: We need to persuade nuclear-armed states to give up their bad habit of investing in wasteful nuclear weapons modernization programs and to encourage them and their allies who have boycotted the negotiations to join the treaty. For this purpose, contracting parties to the new treaty and a wide range of civil society partners will need to join forces to conduct earnest dialogues with the nuclear-armed states and their allies to remind them that reliance on nuclear weapons is not only useless for solving current challenges of international security, but will also endanger the survival of the entire human species. Furthermore, the entire world community needs to cooperate and work together to ensure that the new treaty will become a fully effective legal instrument to achieve nuclear abolition. We believe that such efforts will also help accelerate good-faith nuclear disarmament efforts by the nuclear-armed states.

It is time for the policymakers of the world, especially those in the nuclear-armed states, to exercise decisive leadership in implementing their nuclear disarmament obligation if they are serious about preventing nuclear proliferation. They should recall that past progress in nuclear disarmament took place during peaks of international tension through courageous joint initiatives of political leaders who reached out, as shown in the case of the conclusion of the Limited Test Ban Treaty in 1963 and the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty in 1987. It is their turn to do it again now.

Mayors for Peace, with nearly 7,400 member cities in 162 countries and regions, will continue to cultivate broad global opinion toward nuclear disarmament. We will continue to work together with our diverse partners in the world to nurture a collaborative international environment that encourages world leaders to take decisive and insightful leaderships toward nuclear abolition. We do so in our conviction that when the entire world community can cooperate to strengthen peaceful dispute settlement mechanisms in line with the spirit of UN Charter, the world community moves closer to a peaceful world without nuclear weapons. Let us begin this work today.

Declassified US info on Japanese plutonium production

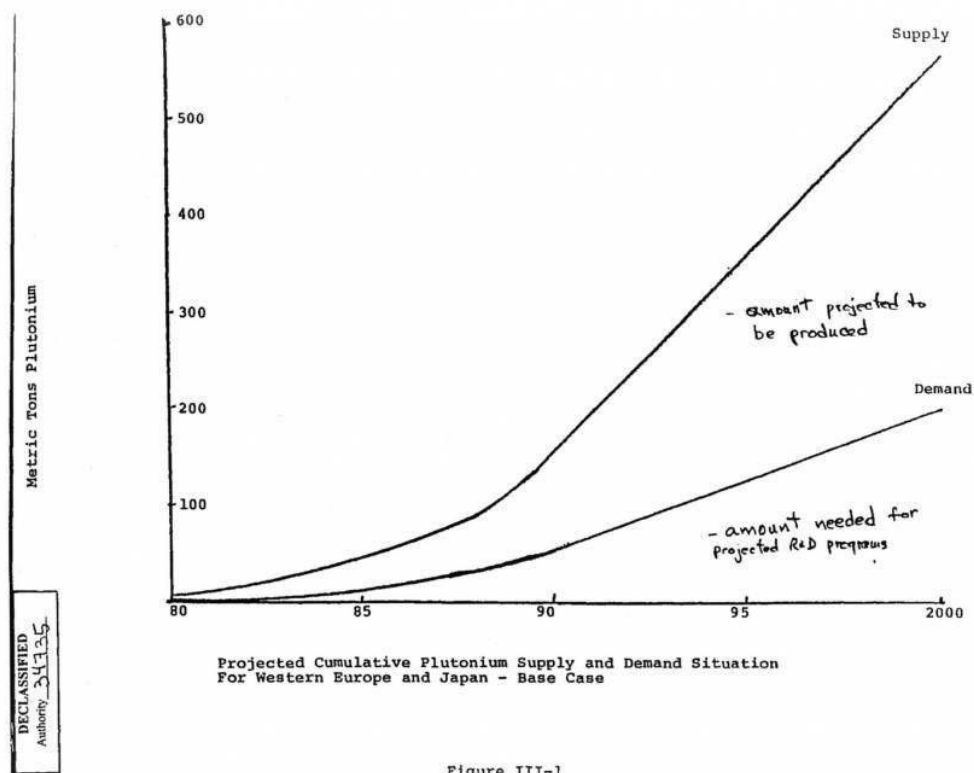


Figure III-1

A declassified U.S. National Security Council document shows a projection of plutonium supply and demand for Europe and Japan in 2000. | COURTESY OF NATIONAL SECURITY ARCHIVE / VIA KYODO
June 9, 2017

Declassified papers reveal U.S. held debate on Japan's nuclear ambitions in 1970s

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2017/06/09/national/history/declassified-papers-reveal-u-s-held-debate-japans-nuclear-ambitions-1970s/#.WTv7mdykJLM>

by Eric Johnston
Staff Writer

OSAKA – Japan's push to establish a nuclear fuel recycling program and use the plutonium created in the process was the center of an intense debate in the U.S. government four decades ago, pitting those who wanted smooth relations with Tokyo against those who worried the plan might lead to the proliferation of sensitive nuclear technology and plutonium stockpiles.

Formerly classified U.S. State Department and National Security Council memos and cables posted Thursday show that Tokyo began pressing Washington in the late 1970s to let it reprocess spent nuclear fuel from U.S. reactors so the extracted plutonium could be used in the so-called fast breeder reactors Japan wanted to build.

The documents were made available by the nongovernmental Washington-based National Security Archive at George Washington University and the Nuclear Nonproliferation International History project at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars.

In a cable marked "Secret" and dated May 29, 1980, Jerry Oplinger, a staff member at the National Security Council, warned his colleagues that if Japan as well as Britain and France went through with plans to build fuel reprocessing plants, it would create new proliferation risks.

“Any one of these three projected projects would more than swamp the projected plutonium needs of all the breeder R&D programs in the world. Three of them will produce a vast surplus of pure, weapons-grade plutonium amounting to several hundred tons by the year 2000. Not only would that stockpile of separated plutonium constitute a danger in itself, it would eventually drive these nations, and those watching their example, into the recycle of plutonium in today’s reactors for economic reasons,” Oplinger wrote.

Others in the U.S. government at the time supported Japan’s desire to experiment with plutonium. In an Aug. 29, 1979, U.S. State Department confidential memo, it was noted that Japan’s then-minister of science technology Iwazo Kaneko had pressed Washington on the issue.

“He stressed that it was essential for Japan to make maximum use of plutonium, particularly fast-breeder reactors,” the memo says.

Other officials, including Assistant Secretary of State Richard Holbrooke, argued in a memorandum dated June 4, 1980, that U.S. reluctance on Japan’s reprocessing program would hurt bilateral trust. Ultimately, the U.S. would drop its opposition to the plans, but with some apprehension.

The debates occurred in the final stage of preparations for Japan’s first reprocessing plant in the village of Tokai, Ibaraki Prefecture, which become operational in 1981, and reprocessed over 1,000 tons of used fuel for research purposes until 2006, when it no longer had any contracts for reprocessing.

In 2014, the Japan Atomic Energy Agency decided to shut down the plant. Last month, the agency said scrapping the facility over a 70-year period will cost an estimated ¥800 billion. The nation still has about 48 tons of plutonium stockpiled with about 11 tons held domestically and the remainder in Britain and France. Next year, the U.S. and Japan are expected to renegotiate an agreement, originally signed in 1988, to cooperate on nuclear power.

How to get nuclear nations to participate?

June 14, 2017

Measures needed to draw nuclear states into U.N. nuke ban treaty talks

<https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20170614/p2a/00m/0na/009000c>

U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Nikki Haley, center, expresses opposition to the treaty outlawing nuclear weapons, at the U.N. headquarters in New York on March 27, 2017. (Mainichi)

The second round of talks at a United Nations conference to negotiate a treaty outlawing nuclear weapons is poised to begin at the U.N. headquarters in New York on June 15, without the participation of the nuclear powers or Japan. The accord is expected to be concluded by the time the talks end on July 7 to become the first treaty outlawing nuclear weapons since the atomic bombing of Japan 72 years ago. However, boosting the force of the pact without the participation of nuclear powers remains a pressing issue.

A draft of the treaty that will go on the negotiating table from June 15 bans the use, development, production, manufacturing, possession, storage, testing and deployment of nuclear weapons. It also prohibits countries from transferring them, accepting them or providing support for any of the banned items. Conference President Elayne Whyte Gomez of Costa Rica expressed optimism for negotiations, saying that the stance of the countries on the central banded items was close.

However, outstanding issues remain. First, the draft does not cover the threat of the use of nuclear weapons, and the test ban is limited to explosive testing, thereby excluding subcritical testing. As a result, anti-nuclear nongovernment organizations and some nonnuclear states that have called for a tougher ban may resist the treaty draft in its current form.

Another issue is the draft's ban on assisting any country with any of the banned items along with the deployment of nuclear weapons. Allies of the United States, including the various countries of NATO, which deploys the United States' nuclear weapons, would not be able to participate, and it seems this would be an obstacle to increasing the number of non-nuclear states joining the treaty. The U.S. science magazine *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* says that this could become a point of confrontation during negotiations.

The treaty is expected to include a reference to "hibakusha," the survivors of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, mentioning the pain of the victims of atomic bombings and nuclear testing. The draft includes proposals for medical and financial support for survivors and measures to restore the environment, but avoids mention of "compensation." This could also be a point of contention.

The biggest issue will be how to maintain the treaty's effectiveness without the nuclear powers participating. The nuclear powers, such as the United States, Britain, France, Russia and China, along with about 40 countries under the U.S. "nuclear umbrella," including members of NATO, have expressed opposition to a treaty that outlaws nuclear weapons, saying that nuclear disarmament should be carried out in stages. Those countries are expected to follow in the line of the first round of talks in March and again declare that they will not take part in the second round. During negotiations, parties will need to discuss measures to bring nuclear states into the treaty.

Yasuyoshi Komizo, chair of the Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation, says that details on how to verify compliance with the treaty could be added later, and that the banned items could be amended with the consent of a certain number of participating countries. There are therefore measures that could be taken if nuclear states were to participate, he says.

"If it's adopted, we can engage in constructive discussion. But if we delay it this time, we won't make any ground for several years," he cautioned, calling for adoption of the treaty.

Michael Krepon, a co-founder of the Stimson Center, a U.S. think tank, expressed understanding for the idea that the treaty would contribute to the formation of an international standard against the use of nuclear weapons. However, he cautioned that if a limit for nuclear states to participate were included in the treaty, then its force would be weakened, and said that if nuclear powers couldn't keep to the time limit, momentum would be lost.

3 million signatures collected by hibakusha

June 17, 2017

As nuke ban treaty talks kick off at U.N., hibakusha hand over petition with 3 million signatures

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2017/06/17/national/nuke-ban-treaty-talks-kick-off-u-n-hibakusha-hand-petition-3-million-signatures/#.WUZi71Fpyos>

Kyodo

NEW YORK – Survivors of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki on Friday presented a petition with nearly 3 million signatures to U.N. officials as a conference to negotiate the world's first nuclear weapons ban treaty got underway.

Toshiyuki Mimaki, 75, and Masako Wada, 73 — survivors, respectively, of the Hiroshima bombing on Aug. 6, 1945, and the Nagasaki bombing three days later — handed over the signatures and an accompanying letter to Costa Rican Ambassador Elayne Whyte Gomez, who serves as chair of the three-week conference that began on Thursday.

A group of hibakusha living in Japan and abroad began a campaign last spring to coincide with the 60th anniversary of the founding of the Japan Confederation of A-and H-Bomb Sufferers Organizations (Nihon Hidankyo).

"We collected about 3 million signatures," Wada, Hidankyo's assistant secretary general, told Gomez as she presented a red paper crane made by her elderly relative. "She encouraged us to collect more and more signatures. We are trying."

Called the "appeal of the hibakusha," the grass-roots movement has garnered significant support. It aims to gather hundreds of millions of signatures by 2020 so that survivors — whose numbers are dwindling — will see the destructive devices banned in their lifetimes.

Mimaki, who shed tears during the encounter with Gomez, personally invited her to Hiroshima as Izumi Nakamitsu, the newly appointed undersecretary general and high representative for disarmament affairs, stood at her side.

"It absolutely inspires me to work harder, but also to remember this is not something that we are doing because it's an intellectual process," Gomez said after meeting. "This is a human process, and we need to do it because it touches the lives of people."

Gomez, who is based in Geneva, visited Nagasaki last April. She went to the atomic bomb museum and memorial and met with hibakusha and the city's mayor.

In describing Friday's encounter, which she called an "emotional one," Gomez recalled her visit to Nagasaki and said the experience "touched me very deeply" and "increased my commitment to the work that we are undertaking."

In the letter handed over along with the signatures, the group calls for the adoption of the treaty.

"We call on the conference to adopt the convention on the prohibition of nuclear weapons, thereby to mark a historic step forward for prohibiting and eliminating nuclear weapons," said the letter, which was addressed to Gomez, Nakamitsu and U.N. Secretary General Antonio Guterres. "International conflicts and heightened tensions cited by nuclear-armed states and their allies as reasons for their opposition to the convention should instead be reasons for promoting the prohibition of nuclear weapons."

Just as in the previous round, the major nuclear-armed states — Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States — are not taking part in the latest session. Japan, Germany and South Korea, which don't have nuclear weapons but rely on the U.S. for nuclear deterrence, are also sitting out.

The submission of the signatures was lauded by participants from nongovernmental organizations, who believe in the importance of a strong show of support.

"The voices of the public conscience and survivors and victims of weapons are supposed to play a crucial role in how we deal with them, so the voices of hibakusha and survivors of nuclear weapons use testing and production should be at the core of what we are doing here," said Matthew Bolton, director of the International Disarmament Institution at Pace University. "This should be a humane and humanitarian and human rights driven process and so it is really encouraging that people are speaking out and the conference is receiving their petition."

The conference concludes on July 7 with the aim of producing the landmark treaty. On the conference's second day, the delegates continued to go through the draft text paragraph by paragraph with the goal of working toward a revised draft that is to be circulated next week.

June 17, 2017

A-bomb survivors submit petition for nuclear ban

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20170617_15/

Representatives of Japanese atomic bomb survivors have compiled a petition of nearly 3 million signatures calling for a nuclear weapons ban treaty. The group handed the document to the chair of the ongoing UN meeting on the convention.

The second round of negotiations aimed at concluding the world's first-ever nuclear weapons ban treaty started on Thursday at UN headquarters in New York.

On the second day of talks on Friday, representatives of atomic bomb survivors in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Toshiyuki Mimaki and Masako Wada presented the petition to the chair of the meeting, Costa Rica's envoy Elayne Whyte. They say their groups collected 2.96 million signatures over just more than a year since last April.

Wada handed the petition over along with a paper crane, a symbol of peace. She said the signatures represent the voices of atomic bomb survivors and citizens, and thanked the chair for her leadership.

Whyte responded that the main purpose of the treaty is to eliminate the suffering caused by nuclear weapons. The representatives applauded her when she said the signatures are very important for the negotiators.

After the handover, Wada observed that the draft treaty incorporates the Japanese word "hibakusha," meaning atomic bombing survivor. She said she believes this shows the delegates have recognized the group's long years of anti-nuclear activities.

Also in New York, atomic bomb survivor Masao Tomonaga from Nagasaki met Japan's UN Ambassador Koro Bessho to relay a message from the Nagasaki mayor, Tomihisa Taue.

The message described a feeling of disappointment that is spreading among Nagasaki citizens over Japan's absence from the negotiations.

Tomonaga said Bessho told him he understands their feeling, but Japan cannot decide on its own to leave the nuclear umbrella, and has had to make a difficult choice regarding the ongoing talks.

See also NHK video:

Atomic Bomb Survivor on UN Treaty

<https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/videos/20170616173356583/>

NYC rally for ban

June 18, 2017

A-bomb victims join NYC rally for ban on nuke weapons at U.N.

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201706180031.html>

By KEITA MANO/ Staff Writer

NEW YORK--Shouting "No More Hiroshima, No More Nagasaki," hundreds of demonstrators marched through a downpour in New York City on June 17, calling for a treaty to ban nuclear weapons under negotiations at the United Nations.

Atomic bomb survivors and others took turns giving speeches when they arrived at the square near the United Nations headquarters. The 1.5-kilometer march was organized by the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.

Elayne Whyte, Costa Rica's ambassador who is chairing the negotiations, pledged to strive toward the establishment of the treaty, while expressing gratitude toward the 3 million signatures collected in a campaign by atomic bomb survivors to highlight the importance of the U.N. talks.

Hibakusha survivors from Hiroshima and Nagasaki traveled to New York to coincide with the negotiations and handed the signatures to Whyte at the U.N. headquarters the previous day.

Toshiyuki Mimaki, 75, a hibakusha from Hiroshima, said he was touched by the participation of so many people in the march.

"Despite the heavy rain, a large number of people came and shouted Hiroshima and Nagasaki together," said Mimaki. "I am so happy and grateful."

Rallies were also held across Japan on June 17 to coincide with the New York City march.

Women march for nuclear arms ban treaty

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20170618_07/

Representatives of Japanese atomic bomb survivors have marched in New York in support of a proposed ban on nuclear weapons being discussed at the United Nations.

Saturday's march was organized by a women's peace group, and came during the second round of UN negotiations aimed at making the world's first-ever treaty to ban nuclear arms.

Toshiyuki Mimaki and Masako Wada came to represent survivors of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Around 800 protestors marched for about 2 kilometers, chanting "No more Hiroshima, No more Nagasaki."

Wada said that atomic bomb survivors have been saying for 72 years that no one else should suffer from nuclear weapons.

Costa Rican Ambassador to the UN Elayne Whyte Gomez, who is also chairing the talks, joined the rally.

She told the demonstrators that she will do her best to successfully conclude the treaty.

After the rally, Mimaki said others share the determination to eliminate nuclear arms.

A demonstrator from the US said that it was great to see atomic bomb survivors supporting the negotiation.

Countries that possess nuclear weapons are not taking part in the talks. Japan, as a country under the US nuclear umbrella, is also sitting out talks.

Negotiators at the UN are hoping to adopt the treaty's provisions by July 7th.

"To save this world in crisis, we need...love"

Hibakusha remind us of the power of love in unstable nuclear climate

<https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20170617/p2a/00m/0na/001000c>

June 17, 2017 (Mainichi Japan)

"I have so many children and grandchildren that I could be put in the 'Guinness Book of World Records!'" - That was the favorite joke of A-bomb survivor, or "hibakusha," Kazue "Kaz" Suyeishi, who passed away on June 12 at the age of 90.

The Hiroshima-native moved to the United States, married and then became the president of the American Society of Hiroshima-Nagasaki A-bomb Survivors. She became known as "Kaz Mama" because of her unique style of talking about her experiences as a survivor. Not being one for lecture-style speaking, she spoke as though she was telling her story to her children or grandchildren.

When Suyeishi came to the U.S., health insurance wouldn't cover hibakusha living there who suffered from conditions relating to the bombing. Some members of Congress even claimed that states shouldn't give money to support "the enemy." On top of all of that, Suyeishi's husband had experienced the internment of Japanese Americans during the war. However, Kaz herself never once held any ill will toward the country that had become her home.

"They say that today's enemies are tomorrow's friends. If people all over the world could all feel love for one another, there would be no more war," Suyeishi would say. "That's what I keep telling the children. Even if they think it's ridiculous, that is my life's work."

When I came across the news of her death, indescribable bitter feelings rose up inside of me. The feelings weren't merely the pain of her loss, but also of being confronted by the reality that the hope for "a world without nuclear weapons" was dying out as well.

Then-U.S. President Barack Obama's abstract but moving speech and attitude of reaching out to the hibakusha on a calm evening in Hiroshima in May last year will forever be burned into my memory. Not much more than a year has passed, and the world has changed drastically. While the U.S. administration under President Donald Trump has vowed to expand its arsenal of nuclear weaponry, North Korea conducts continuous missile tests, leading the world on a path toward the outbreak of nuclear war.

However, when I think about all of that, I feel this was inevitable. While President Obama looked at the Hiroshima A-Bomb Dome from a distance, he did not approach it and hastily made his exit. While the president moved the hearts of the Japanese people by presenting flowers and wreaths of folded paper cranes to the hibakusha, he moved forward with plans to modernize his country's nuclear weapons at great expense. The cold truth remains unchanged.

It was Suyeishi who said, "Obama's pleas will largely go unheard, and even the reach of my words are probably limited by time and place, but the only thing we can do is hold onto love and continue conveying our message." Still, it makes me wonder just how sincere Obama really was about the elimination of nuclear weapons.

Some say it is Japan that has changed. Although it appeared the U.N. would adopt the Convention on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, Japan stated that it would be "difficult to participate" in it, perhaps because of its ties to the U.S., and has opposed the negotiation of the treaty.

That's why I sometimes can't think of that evening in Hiroshima as anything other than some kind of Japan-America collaboration movie. Or was it a beautiful dream seen for a fleeting moment by a world heading for oblivion? To save this world in crisis, we need new efforts and, of course, what Suyeishi always taught -- love. (By Hiroshi Fuse, Editorial Writer and Expert Senior Writer)

Pressing for ban of nuclear weapons

June 21, 2017

A-bomb survivors press for weapon ban, to make Nagasaki nuclear bombing world's last

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2017/06/21/national/bomb-survivors-press-weapon-ban-make-nagasaki-nuclear-bombing-worlds-last/#.WUpxzFFpyot>

Kyodo

NEW YORK – Two Nagasaki atomic bomb survivors pressed countries participating in negotiations Monday for a first-ever treaty banning nuclear weapons to realize their dream of seeing the landmark document adopted next month.

Nagasaki must be the last place to suffer from an atomic bomb (attack)," said Masao Tomonaga, who was 2 years old when the second atomic bomb was dropped on Nagasaki on Aug. 9, 1945, three days after the first attack destroyed Hiroshima.

Having "narrowly escaped" the blast from his home, located 2.7 kilometers from the epicenter, Tomonaga went on to become a doctor. He spent years researching the inhumanity inflicted on his patients and fellow survivors, who are known in Japanese as hibakusha.

The 74 year-old medical doctor, along with another Nagasaki survivor Masako Wada, delivered remarks as representatives of nongovernmental organizations that had been allotted speaking time.

The aim of the survivors, who are now dwindling in numbers, is to see a world free of nuclear weapons within their lifetimes.

Tomonaga said he was heartened to see how efforts of the hibakusha have paid off. Not only has the second session of the three-week conference seen serious daily discussions on each of the 14 articles, but hibakusha have been mentioned twice in the draft preamble.

Hopes are high for the treaty to be finalized by the end of the session, on July 7.

“A nuclear weapons ban treaty is essential in order to further strengthen the will of mankind,” he noted, but added that for it to become truly “effective” more countries need to sign on.

That includes the nuclear weapon states — Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States — which have skipped the talks. Additionally, he took aim at Japan, which operates under the nuclear umbrella of the United States, for not participating in the U.N. conference.

“Nagasaki wishes for all participating states to continue to create ‘human intellect’, through discussion on articles that contain measures to promote participation of such nuclear states while seeking the realization of a world free of nuclear weapons,” he stressed.

Wada, who is the assistant secretary general of the Japan Confederation of A-and H-Bomb Sufferers Organizations, also noted the importance of the proposed treaty and how the draft text has brought about “tremendous hope.”

Having survived the Nagasaki bomb blast as a 1-year-old, she, like others, has carried with her the desire to see “no more nuclear bomb survivors anywhere on earth.”

“The agony of the hibakusha continues. It is deep and seems never-ending,” the 73-year-old said. **“The nuclear weapon is created by humans, used by humans, and therefore has to be abolished by humans.”**

(Not) showing serious enough commitment toward nuke disarmament

Japan 21, 2017

Japan should join negotiations to ban nuclear weapons

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2017/06/21/editorials/japan-join-negotiations-ban-nuclear-weapons/#.WUpzAFFpyos>

The second round of negotiations to create a global treaty to outlaw nuclear weapons started last week at the United Nations and is scheduled to conclude July 7. Japan, which relies on the U.S. nuclear umbrella, has boycotted the talks, apparently out of concern that its participation could complicate its relationship with the United States. The Abe administration should reconsider whether its stance is beneficial for Japan — the only nation in history to suffer a nuclear attack. Japan should take part in the negotiations and seriously seek ways to bridge the differences between the nuclear weapons powers, which oppose the treaty, and the non-nuclear weapons states that are pushing forward with the accord. A failure to take concrete action in this direction could imperil Japan’s credibility as a country serious about nuclear disarmament.

Last December, the U.N. General Assembly adopted a resolution calling for the start of the treaty talks, with 113 members voting for it and 35 others, including the U.S., Russia, Britain and France — all of which are nuclear powers — and Japan, voting against it. Thirteen other members, including China and the Netherlands — a NATO member that is under the U.S. nuclear umbrella — abstained from the vote. Following the first round of negotiations on the prospective treaty, Costa Rica, which serves as chair of the talks, submitted a draft treaty in late May.

It is significant that the planned treaty’s basic ideal is founded on “the catastrophic humanitarian consequences that would result from any use of nuclear weapons,” a phrase appearing at the outset of the preamble, and that it takes into consideration the pains of survivors of the nuclear-bombed cities of

Hiroshima and Nagasaki, who still suffer from health damage caused by the radiation and have played an important role in rousing global opinion against nuclear arms. The preamble says the catastrophic consequences of nuclear weapons “pose grave implication for human survival” and mentions “the suffering of the victims of the use of nuclear weapons (Hibakusha) as well as of those affected by the testing of nuclear weapons.”

The draft treaty binds state parties to “never under any circumstances ... develop, produce, manufacture, otherwise acquire, possess or stockpile nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices ... (or) use nuclear weapons.” It prohibits conducting nuclear weapons test explosions and transferring nuclear arsenals and control over them to any other state. It likewise bans receiving the transfer of nuclear weapons and accepting control over them.

Although the draft stops short of outlawing the threat of the use of nuclear weapons, it obliges state parties to “never ... assist, encourage, or induce, in any way, anyone to engage in any activity prohibited to a state party under the convention” — apparently with countries under a nuclear umbrella in mind. This part of the draft treaty can be taken as an effort to challenge the idea of extended nuclear deterrence, under which a nuclear weapons state seeks to prevent a nuclear attack against an ally by indicating its readiness to use its own nuclear weapons in retaliation.

Unfortunately, all states possessing nuclear weapons, including the U.S., Russia and China, have refused to take part in the treaty negotiations, and all countries relying on the U.S. nuclear umbrella, except the Netherlands, have followed suit. Explaining its nonparticipation in the talks, Japan said that if the negotiations proceed without the participation of the nuclear weapons powers, it would cause the schism in the international community to deepen, making it difficult for it to take part in the talks “in a constructive manner and in good faith.”

Japan also thinks that at a time when North Korea continues to carry out nuclear weapons and ballistic missile tests, U.S. nuclear deterrence is as important as ever. But if Japan continues to oppose the treaty-based ideal of outlawing nuclear weapons and emphasizes the importance of nuclear deterrence as its security umbrella, North Korea has an excuse to rely further on its nuclear weapons as diplomatic leverage and even to justify their use.

Japan should immediately take part in the treaty negotiations and contribute to devising a system under which nuclear weapons states can join the treaty in the future and then begin a process of reducing and eventually eliminating nuclear weapons. It should not forget that given the large number of nations that support the treaty, it is likely to be adopted, and that if it enters into force it will have a global moral weight even without the participation of the nuclear weapons powers.

Opponents of the planned treaty have argued that it would weaken the regime of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. But the draft treaty characterizes the NPT as “an essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament.” Japan should make sincere efforts to create a system under which both the NPT and the global treaty outlawing nuclear weapons can co-exist.

Making nuke ban conditions legally binding?

June 28, 2017

New draft of nuclear ban treaty submitted

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20170628_10/

A second draft of a legally binding nuclear ban treaty has been presented to negotiators at a UN conference in New York.

The chair of the negotiations, Costa Rican ambassador Elayne Whyte Gomez, submitted the draft on Tuesday as the basis for further discussions before the talks are due to end on July 7th.

The draft text shows a procedure toward abolishing nuclear weapons, based on discussions in the second round of the negotiations held this month.

The draft says any nuclear-armed state looking to join the treaty "shall immediately remove from operational status its nuclear weapon systems and destroy as soon as possible any nuclear weapons or nuclear explosive devices it owns, possesses, or controls."

The draft also calls on states choosing to join the treaty to submit a time-bound plan for the verifiable and irreversible destruction of its nuclear weapons within 60 days after declaring that they will remove their nuclear arsenals.

Whyte said **the draft incorporates expressions that indicate endeavors to make the legal provisions binding** and to clarify political desires.

The preamble of the new draft text says state parties to this treaty are "mindful of the unacceptable suffering of and harm" of the atomic bomb survivors, or Hibakusha, as well as "those affected by the testing of nuclear weapons."

The draft also recognizes efforts for the total elimination of nuclear weapons by the Hibakusha as well as international organizations.

The UN General Assembly decided last year to hold the UN conference at the request of non-nuclear powers.

Nuclear powers as well as Japan and other countries relying on nuclear deterrence are not taking part in the talks.

Toward total nuclear arms ban?

July 4, 2017

Final draft of nuke ban treaty circulated, adoption expected Fri.

https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20170704/p2g/00m/0in/044000c#cxrecs_s

NEW YORK (Kyodo) -- The United Nations looks set to adopt a landmark nuclear weapons ban treaty this week, with the third and final draft of the accord circulated Monday following intensive negotiations over the weekend.

"Each one of us has assumed the historic responsibility to give human kind an instrument that reflects the moral imperative of prohibiting nuclear weapons and leading to a future free of nuclear weapons, as was the case more than seven decades ago," Elayne Whyte Gomez, Costa Rican ambassador and conference president said earlier.

Contained in the latest draft, expected to be adopted by the end of the session Friday, is new language that explicitly prohibits states from using or threatening to use nuclear weapons.

Although Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States, which hold the largest arsenals, have not been in attendance, negotiators are hopeful they might one day endorse the legal instrument.

Also notably absent from the negotiations are nuclear umbrella states, such as Japan, which is the only country to have been attacked with atomic weapons.

With the exception of the Netherlands, other members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, an international alliance of countries, have also not been present at the U.N. sessions.

Five non-nuclear NATO allies, Belgium, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, and Turkey, host about 180 U.S. nuclear bombs at six air bases, according to the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists.

On other issues, two references to the Japanese atomic bomb survivors, called hibakusha, remain in the preamble of the text. They along with the atomic blast survivors from places like the Marshall Islands are seen as having brought the notion of humanitarian consequences to the forefront.

Many conference participants have recognized the vital importance of the hibakusha for having contributed to peace and disarmament education over the years at various international conferences.

In addition to the current three-week conference, a one-week gathering was held in March as laid out in a U.N. General Assembly resolution adopted last year.

The text also calls for the states to open for treaty signature on Sept. 19. The date coincides with the annual General Assembly debate which draws the top leaders from around the globe.

July 4, 2017

UN revised draft aims for total nuclear arms ban

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20170704_18/

A United Nations conference negotiating a nuclear weapons ban is set to adopt a legally binding treaty on Friday.

Conference President Elayne Whyte Gomez on Monday presented a revised draft. It includes new language that explicitly prohibits states from using or threatening to use nuclear weapons.

The passage clearly negates the traditional theory of nuclear deterrence. Earlier versions did not do this.

The draft in its preface refers to the suffering of Japanese atomic bomb survivors, known as Hibakusha, praising their long efforts to ban nuclear arms.

Gomez says she hopes to deliver good news on the draft's adoption.

The United States, Russia and other nuclear powers, as well as countries depending on the nuclear umbrella such as Japan, have not taken part in the negotiations, saying a ban would not lead to a practical solution.

Nuclear arms ban set to be adopted at the UN

July 7, 2017

U.N. set to adopt treaty banning atomic weapons despite opposition from nuclear powers, Japan

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2017/07/07/world/u-n-set-adopt-treaty-banning-atomic-weapons-despite-opposition-nuclear-powers-japan/#.WV-BRVFpyos>

AFP-JIJI

UNITED NATIONS – A global treaty banning nuclear weapons is set to be adopted at the United Nations on Friday despite opposition from the United States, Britain, France and other nuclear powers that boycotted negotiations.

Even Japan — the only country to have suffered atomic attacks, in 1945 — boycotted the talks, as did most NATO countries.

Supporters describe the treaty as a historic achievement, but the nuclear-armed states have dismissed the ban as unrealistic, arguing it will have no impact on reducing the global stockpile of 15,000 nuclear weapons.

Led by Austria, Brazil, Mexico, South Africa and New Zealand, 141 countries have taken part in three weeks of negotiations on the treaty that provides for a total ban on developing, stockpiling or threatening to use nuclear weapons.

Advocates hope it will increase pressure on nuclear states to take disarmament more seriously.

“This will be a historic moment,” Costa Rica’s ambassador, Elayne Whyte Gomez, the president of the U.N. conference on the treaty, said on the eve of the adoption.

“The world has been waiting for this legal norm for 70 years,” she said, calling it a “response for humanity.”

None of the nine countries that possess nuclear weapons — the United States, Russia, Britain, China, France, India, Pakistan, North Korea and Israel — took part in the negotiations.

U.S. Ambassador Nikki Haley came out strongly against the ban when negotiations opened on March 27, saying, “There is nothing I want more for my family than a world with no nuclear weapons, but we have to be realistic.”

“Is there anyone that believes that North Korea would agree to a ban on nuclear weapons?” she asked.

Nuclear powers argue their arsenals serve as a deterrent against a nuclear attack and say they remain committed to the decades-old Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, which seeks to prevent the spread of atomic weapons but also puts the onus on nuclear states to reduce their stockpiles.

However, impatience is growing among many nonnuclear states over the slow pace of disarmament, as are worries that the weapons of mass destruction will fall into the wrong hands.

Disarmament campaigners say the new treaty will go a long way in increasing the stigma associated with nuclear weapons and will have an impact on public opinion.

“The key thing is that it changes the legal landscape,” said Richard Moyes, director of the British-based organization Article 36. “It stops states with nuclear weapons from being able to hide behind the idea that they are not illegal.”

“This is really about removing the prestige from nuclear weapons,” said Beatrice Fihn, director of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons. “They are seen as something very valuable and as giving power. This is supposed to remove that.”

During a meeting at the General Assembly, the treaty is expected to be adopted by consensus by the conference of nations that has negotiated the document without the nuclear powers and their allies. After its adoption, the treaty will be open for signatures as of Sept. 20 and will enter into force when 50 countries have ratified it.

During a vote at the U.N. General Assembly in December, 113 countries voted in favor of starting negotiations on the new treaty while 35 opposed the move and 13 abstained.

July 7, 2017

First treaty banning nuclear weapons expected to be adopted

<https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20170707/p2g/00m/0in/060000c>

UNITED NATIONS (AP) -- More than 120 countries are expected to adopt the first-ever treaty to ban nuclear weapons Friday despite a boycott by all nuclear-armed nations, including the United States, which has pointed to North Korea's escalating nuclear and ballistic missile programs.

Elayne Whyte Gomez, president of the U.N. conference that has been negotiating the legally binding treaty, told reporters Thursday that "we are on the verge of adopting the treaty on the prohibition of nuclear weapons."

"This will be a historic moment and it will be the first multilateral nuclear disarmament treaty to be concluded in more than 20 years," she said. "The world has been waiting for this legal norm for 70 years," since the use of the first atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945 at the end of World War II.

Whyte Gomez, Costa Rica's ambassador to the U.N. in Geneva, said she hoped the treaty would be adopted by consensus, but she said the rules of procedure for the conference also allowed for a vote.

In December, U.N. member states overwhelmingly approved a resolution calling for negotiations on a treaty that would outlaw nuclear weapons, despite strong opposition from nuclear-armed nations and their allies who refused to participate in the talks.

Whyte Gomez said 129 countries signed up to take part in drafting the treaty, which represents two-thirds of the U.N.'s 193 member states. But all nuclear states and NATO members have boycotted the negotiations except for the Netherlands, which has U.S. nuclear weapons on its territory and was urged by its parliament to send a delegation to the negotiations.

Following Wednesday's final review of the text after nearly three weeks of intense negotiations, Whyte Gomez said she was "convinced that we have achieved a general agreement on a robust and comprehensive prohibition on nuclear weapons."

"I am really confident that the final draft has captured the aspirations of the overwhelming majority of those participating in the conference, including civil society," she said.

The final draft treaty requires all countries that ratify "never under any circumstances to develop, test, produce, manufacture, otherwise acquire, possess or stockpile nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices." It also bans any transfer or use of nuclear weapons or nuclear explosive devices -- and the threat to use such weapons.

Retired British Royal Navy Cmdr. Rob Green, who flew nuclear strike aircraft and is now co-director of the Peace Foundation's Disarmament and Security Center, said at a news conference Wednesday that "the heart of this treaty" was the prohibition on threatening to use nuclear weapons.

Richard Moyes, managing director of Article 36, a British-based organization that works to prevent harm from nuclear and other weapons, said it isn't plausible to think the world can maintain security based on mutually threatening to incinerate hundreds of thousands of people with nuclear weapons "when we know there have been near-misses, errors of judgment -- there's been accidents -- and there's a degree of instability in the political leadership in the world."

But not one of the nine countries believed to possess nuclear weapons -- the United States, Russia, Britain, China, France, India, Pakistan, North Korea and Israel -- is supporting the treaty.

The United States and other nuclear powers instead want to strengthen and reaffirm the nearly half-century-old Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, considered the cornerstone of global nonproliferation efforts.

That pact sought to prevent the spread of atomic arms beyond the five original weapons powers -- the U.S., Russia, Britain, France and China. It requires non-nuclear signatory nations to not pursue atomic weapons in exchange for a commitment by the five powers to move toward nuclear disarmament and to guarantee non-nuclear states access to peaceful nuclear technology for producing energy.

North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile tests, including its July 3 launch, have become a timely argument for proponents and opponents of the treaty to ban atomic weapons.

Beatrice Fihn, executive director of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, said 15,000 nuclear weapons around the world have not managed to deter Pyongyang's nuclear ambitions and a new approach is needed starting with prohibition as the first step to eliminate nuclear arms.

U.S. Ambassador Nikki Haley said March 27 when talks began on the nuclear weapons ban treaty that "there is nothing I want more for my family than a world with no nuclear weapons, but we have to be realistic."

She asked if anyone thought North Korea would give up its nuclear weapons, stressing that North Koreans would be "cheering" a nuclear ban treaty -- and Americans and others would be at risk.

Official: 120-plus nations set to approve nuclear ban treaty

https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20170707/p2g/00m/0in/046000c#cxrecs_s

July 7, 2017 (Mainichi Japan)

UNITED NATIONS (AP) -- The president of the U.N. conference drafting what could be the first-ever treaty to ban nuclear weapons said over 120 countries have agreed on the text, which is expected to be formally adopted Friday although all nuclear-armed nations are boycotting the effort.

Elayne Whyte Gomez, Costa Rica's ambassador to the U.N. in Geneva, said at a news conference Thursday that "this will be a historic moment and it will be the first multilateral nuclear disarmament treaty to be concluded in more than 20 years."

In December, U.N. member states overwhelmingly approved a resolution calling for negotiations on a treaty that would outlaw nuclear weapons over strong opposition from nuclear-armed countries and their allies, which have boycotted the negotiations.

Whyte Gomez said 129 countries signed up to take part in negotiating the treaty, which represents two-thirds of the U.N.'s 193 member states. But all nuclear states and NATO members have avoided the negotiations except for the Netherlands, which has U.S. nuclear weapons on its territory and was urged by its parliament to send a delegation to the talks.

Following Wednesday's final review of the text after nearly three weeks of negotiations, Whyte Gomez said she is "convinced that we have achieved a general agreement on a robust and comprehensive prohibition on nuclear weapons."

"We are on the verge of adopting the treaty on the prohibition of nuclear weapons," she said. "I am really confident that the final draft has captured the aspirations of the overwhelming majority of those participating in the conference, including civil society."

Whyte Gomez said she hopes the treaty will be adopted by consensus, but she said the rules of procedure for the conference also allow for a vote.

The final draft treaty requires all countries that ratify "never under any circumstances to develop, test, produce, manufacture, otherwise acquire, possess or stockpile nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices." It also bans any transfer or use of nuclear weapons or nuclear explosive devices -- and the threat to use such weapons.

Not one of the nine countries believed to possess nuclear weapons -- the United States, Russia, Britain, China, France, India, Pakistan, North Korea and Israel -- is supporting a treaty.

Instead of adopting a total ban, the United States and other nuclear powers want to strengthen and reaffirm the nearly half-century-old Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, considered the cornerstone of global nonproliferation efforts.

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North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile tests, including its July 3 launch, have become a timely argument for proponents and opponents of the treaty ban.

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North Korea & nukes (1)



July 7, 2017

Negotiations won't stop Pyongyang from getting nukes

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2017/07/07/commentary/world-commentary/negotiations-wont-stop-pyongyang-getting-nukes/#.WV-By1Fpyos>

by Eli Lake
Bloomberg

WASHINGTON – When North Korea tested an intercontinental ballistic missile this week — what its boy tyrant called a “gift to the American bastards” — the response from the Trump administration was fairly conventional.

Secretary of State Rex Tillerson correctly called it an escalation. He brought the matter before the United Nations Security Council. And he assured, “We will never accept a nuclear-armed North Korea.”

If that sounds familiar, it's because not tolerating a nuclear North Korea has been a pillar of U.S. policy since the peninsula's first nuclear crisis in the early 1990s. Keeping nuclear weapons out of the hands of this regime is an admirable goal; a government is hardly a model of restraint if its prisons are so vast they can be seen from space. And a few years ago, it might have even been an achievable goal. But in 2017, it is at best quaint and at worst delusional.

The sad truth is that North Korea is dangerously close to going nuclear, and almost every expert who has studied the problem understands there is nothing the U.S. can do about it.

The North Koreans are much closer to going nuclear than they were when the U.S. negotiated a flawed interim deal in 1994, known as the Joint Framework Agreement, to halt their progress.

Pyongyang has already detonated nuclear devices on five occasions. The North also has continued to make progress on ballistic missiles. The latest test went farther and higher than previous ones had. It's only a matter of time until the regime of Kim Jong Un will perfect this technology, along with the relatively easier task of shrinking a nuclear device to fit on a warhead.

North Korea will arm itself with nuclear weapons, because the regime knows that its survival depends on it. In the first round of nuclear negotiations, there was a credible threat of force against North Korea. The deal offered for the last quarter century was essentially: We let you survive if you give up your nukes. Today, that offer is no longer credible. North Koreans delivered this message as recently as last month to a group of Western experts who met with them in Sweden in what is known as Track 2 diplomacy. Sue Mi Terry, a former CIA analyst and expert on North Korea, explained it to her counterparts at an event last month at the Asia Society.

"The North Koreans emphasize over and over, denuclearization is completely off the table," she said. "We are smoking something if we think this is something that is achievable. They say it's not negotiable, it's over, it's done, this is not something we can talk about."

Terry went on to say her North Korean counterparts said, "We are so close to completing the nuclear program, we are so close to perfecting this nuclear arsenal, we did not come this far to give it up." She added that they gave the examples of Libya and Iraq as regimes that abandoned nukes only to face regime change later.

It's not just Terry who at this point is persuaded the goal of a denuclearized North Korea is not attainable. Bill Clinton's secretary of defense, William Perry, told a group of journalists last month in Washington that the best the U.S. could hope for now would be a freeze on North Korea's program, similar to the one the Obama administration negotiated with Iran. But again, this would not roll back the considerable progress the regime has made. What's more, he said he would not recommend today a pre-emptive strike against the regime's arsenal. This is in part because North Korea has thousands of mortars capable of hitting Seoul, but also because a military strike wouldn't be able to take out the country's entire nuclear infrastructure.

Perry is less gloomy than other experts. Michael Auslin, the Williams-Griffis fellow in contemporary Asia at the Hoover Institution, was blunt. He told me: "Negotiations won't work."

Auslin explained that over a quarter century, Pyongyang has used the negotiations to buy time and extract concessions from the West. Among the concessions the North Koreans have gained from the negotiations are being removed from the U.S. list of regimes that sponsor terrorism, shipments of food and fuel, the promise of light water plutonium reactors and the removal of crippling economic sanctions.

Despite all of these carrots, the regime has cheated on the commitments it has already made. The George W. Bush administration discovered this in its first term when it learned of North Korean work on a uranium enrichment facility. In 2002, an envoy for the regime acknowledged it in talks, and the Bush administration pulled out of the 1994 joint framework negotiated by Clinton.

The truth is there are no good policy options today for North Korea. It's doubtful that regime change is even possible. The U.S. government is culturally ill-equipped to foment insurrection inside such a notoriously closed society. And an invasion of North Korea would be about as popular in America today as cancer.

It's possible that sabotage and other forms of cyberattacks could delay the North's nuclear capability. What about working with China? President Donald Trump acknowledged Wednesday morning in a tweet that his desire for China to apply more pressure on North Korea has not worked. "There is no good existential answer to North Korea," Auslin told me. "It's not just about negotiations. It's about the entire set of political, economic, social, security threats we face." He said at this point the regime had accomplished a stalemate, and was close to achieving a checkmate against the West. That's not the kind of thing Americans like to hear. We dream big. But in foreign policy, it's important to be realistic. The Trump administration has an opportunity to level with the public in a way prior administrations did not. If you want to stop North Korea from getting a nuke, that requires war. If you're not prepared to go that far, stop pretending the U.S. can achieve its goals with more talking. It won't work. *Eli Lake was the senior national security correspondent for the Daily Beast and covered national security and intelligence for the Washington Times and New York Sun.*

North Korea & nukes (2)



Living with a nuclear North Korea

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2017/07/07/commentary/world-commentary/living-nuclear-north-korea/#.WV-CNFFpyos>

by Gwynne Dyer

LONDON – “American bastards would be not very happy with this gift sent on the July 4 anniversary,” said North Korean leader Kim Jong Un about his country’s first successful test of an intercontinental ballistic

missile on Wednesday. And indeed Americans are not happy about it, although it would be overstating the case to say that panic is sweeping the United States at the news that North Korea's ICBMs can now reach America.

One reason for the lack of public panic is that Alaska is not a central concern for most Americans, and Alaska is the only part of the U.S. that North Korea's Hwasong-14 missile can actually reach.

Another reason is that the U.S. authorities insist that North Korea's nuclear weapons are too big and heavy to fit on its ICBMs. (It's not clear whether they have actual intelligence that confirms this, or are just whistling in the dark.)

And a third reason might be that Americans are secretly embarrassed by the sheer hypocrisy of their own government's position in this affair.

Well, no, not really. The vast majority of Americans are blissfully unaware that there is any hypocrisy involved in demanding that North Korea refrain from getting what the U.S. has had for the past 72 years.

So is the U.S. government.

U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson was being entirely sincere when he said that North Korea's ICBM test "represents a new escalation of the threat to the United States, our allies and partners, the region and the world." Wrong, but entirely sincere.

He is obviously aware that the U.S. has had nuclear weapons since 1945, and has even dropped them on Japan. He knows that his country has had ICBMs since the 1950s, and still has hundreds ready to launch on short notice. How is the American posture different from the one that North Korea aspires to?

Two differences, really. One is that the U.S. has at least a hundred times as many nuclear weapons as North Korea, and delivery vehicles at least two technological generations further down the road. Another is that the U.S. has a clearly stated policy that says it might use nuclear weapons first in a conflict. Weirdly, this just makes American ICBMs sound more dangerous than North Korea's.

That's not really true. The U.S. used its first nuclear weapons as soon as it got them in 1945, but despite all the wars it has waged in the 72 years since then it has never used them again. Nuclear weapons are so terrifying that they actually force the people who possess them to think seriously about the consequences of using them.

Pyongyang has obviously been thinking hard about the grave implications of nuclear weapons too, because it never actually threatens to use North Korea's nukes in a first strike. It's always about deterring a nuclear attack on North Korea. And though the North Korean regime lies and blusters a lot, you can believe it about this.

North Korea will probably have ICBMs that can reach big American cities in three to five years if it keeps up the current pace of development and testing. That would buy North Korea a limited degree of safety from an American nuclear attack, because one or more of its missiles might survive a U.S. first strike and be able to carry out a "revenge from the grave." That is how nuclear deterrence works, at least in theory. But even full-range nuclear-tipped ICBMs would not give the North Korean regime the ability to launch a nuclear attack on America (or Japan, or South Korea) without being exterminated in an immediate, massive nuclear counterstrike. So you can probably trust the North Korean regime not to do anything so terminally stupid — unless people like Kim are literally crazy.

That's why American diplomats work so hard to convince everybody else that the North Koreans really are frothing mad, impervious to logic and not even interested in self-preservation. Only then can they argue that the North Koreans should be denied nuclear weapons even though Americans, Russians, Chinese, British, French, Israelis, Indians and Pakistanis can be trusted with them.

There is no evidence the North Koreans really are crazy. In the 64 years since the end of the Korean War they have never risked a war, and they are extremely unlikely to do so now. And while there is a rather

erratic leader in Washington, there are probably enough grown-ups around him to avoid any fatal mistakes on the American side either.

So North Korea will probably get its nuclear deterrent in the end, and we will all learn to live with it — like we learned to live with mutual U.S.-Russian nuclear deterrence, mutual U.S.-Chinese nuclear deterrence and mutual Indian-Pakistani nuclear deterrence.

Gwynne Dyer is an independent journalist and military historian.

US puts pressure on Japan to skip forum on nuke ban

July 7, 2017

US pressures allies not to attend nuke ban treaty forum

https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20170707/p2g/00m/0in/051000c#cxrecs_s

NEW YORK (Kyodo) -- The United States has urged its allies to skip a forum to discuss the implications of a landmark nuclear weapons ban treaty that is expected to be adopted Friday, according to an email seen by Kyodo News.

Responding to an invitation from Kazakhstan to a launch event at its mission for the first session of the Nuclear Discussion Forum, the message from the U.S. mission said, "The United States will not participate in any event on the ban treaty, including this one."

"We call on our friends and allies to also not participate in this event. Our position on the ban treaty is clear and will not change," it said.

Participants in the forum are expected to talk about the outcome of U.N. negotiations on the treaty that end Friday, as well as the way forward.

In addition to the United States, the other nuclear weapon states -- Britain, China, France, and Russia -- have skipped the negotiations, claiming the treaty undermines the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty which they have all signed.

Kazakhstan is known for its antinuclear stance, having given up more than 1,400 Soviet strategic nuclear warheads in the 1990s, and has called for the complete elimination of such weapons.

The event is being organized along with the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, which is headed by Japan's Izumi Nakamitsu.

Her deputy, Thomas Markram, is scheduled to make opening remarks, before presentations by ambassadors from South Africa, Brazil and Ireland. Negotiators from the three countries have been actively engaged in the U.N. proceedings that led to the final text and have been proponents of the process from the beginning.

The mission's new Ambassador Kairat Umarov will preside over the event which is open to all U.N. member states, irrespective of their views.

In March, when the first round of nuclear weapons ban talks got under way, U.S. Ambassador Nikki Haley staged a protest outside the U.N. General Assembly hall, along with other nuclear weapon states and North Atlantic Treaty Organization allies.

At the start of the second session that began on June 15, there was no such event. It remains to be seen how the nuclear weapon states will respond to the likely adoption of the ban treaty on Friday.

122-1 vote at UN

People for Nuclear Disarmament
Human Survival Project

World Rejects Nuclear Weapons in 122-1 Vote at UN

At the United Nations in New York, a meeting convened by a December 2016 vote of the UN General Assembly has voted to make nuclear weapons illegal.

The decisive vote of 122 'yes' to 1 'no' vote took place this morning in the vast and packed Conference Room 1 just off the first sub-basement of the UN, after the Netherlands called for a vote. They were the sole 'NO' vote though Singapore abstained.

The vote was followed by prolonged cheers and clapping both from the many nongovernmental organisations present in the completely full Conference room 1 and in an overflow room, also completely full.

The President of the conference, Ambassador Elaine Whyte-Gomez of Costa Rica, could be seen with a number of other delegates, wiping away tears as the numbers flashed onto the electronic voting board. As the vote was announced, she announced that there was a very long list of Governments that wished to speak about the decision. In fact as I write this release in the lunch-break that list has not been exhausted. The vote followed three weeks of often agonizing negotiations, as well as two days of preliminary negotiations in March.

The Nuclear Prohibition Treaty arguably reinforces what is already implicit in both International Humanitarian Law and in article VI of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT), namely that nuclear weapons are illegal.

While it could be argued that nuclear weapons are already illegal this treaty for the first time provides an explicit multilateral legal instrument that outlaws them.

In taking the floor, country after country noted the historic nature of what was being done. Other weapons of mass destruction such as biological weapons and chemical weapons, as well as landmines, are illegal. Yet until today, a specific instrument outlawing nuclear weapons has not been in existence. Now, there is one. Governments also noted the critical role of civil society in bringing about this result, as well as its existential necessity.

People for Nuclear Disarmament's nuclear weapons campaigner John Hallam, who has been present for the full three weeks of the negotiation as well as participating in some of the conferences leading up to it, noted that:

"Nuclear weapons remain the only weapon that can destroy both civilization and much of the biosphere in less than a couple of hours and can do so by mistake - a mistake that has nearly taken place on upwards of a dozen terrifying occasions already."

"To eliminate nuclear weapons completely is an survival imperative that civilization cannot evade. Its clear that the overwhelming majority of the worlds Governments understand that narrow considerations of so called 'national security' cannot override the imperative of the survival of civilization and of the human species, which nuclear weapons place in jeopardy. We call on all Governments without exception,

including especially the Governments of the 'official' nuclear weapon states and other states that possess nuclear weapons, to do their moral duty to the rest of the planet and to join the treaty and eliminate their nuclear arsenals."

"Ultimately, if we completely fail to eliminate nuclear weapons, nuclear weapons will eliminate us.

Nuclear abolition is not a 'feel-good some-century' ambition. It is an urgent survival imperative and needs to be prioritised as such. The majority of the worlds Governments have shown that they understand that very well. Now the states that have nuclear weapons must come on board"

"We call on all Governments without exception, no matter what kinds of military alliances they may be involved with, to join the Treaty and to make the necessary changes in their security policies."

John Hallam,

People for Nuclear Disarmament

Human Survival Project

United Nations

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July 8, 2017

Nuclear ban treaty approved at UN

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20170708_08/

A global treaty to legally ban nuclear weapons has been approved at the United Nations.

Negotiations on the legally binding treaty have been underway at UN headquarters in New York since March, with more than 120 countries taking part.

On Friday, 122 countries and territories voted in favor while only one country, the Netherlands, voted against. It was the only NATO member participating.

In a speech prior to the vote, the chair of the negotiations, Costa Rican Ambassador Elayne Whyte Gomez, stressed the significance of the treaty, which bans the development, possession, and use of nuclear arms.

Its adoption triggered applause and cheers from attendees, including those who experienced the atomic bombing of Hiroshima.

The treaty will be opened for signatures in September and will enter into force 90 days after 50 countries have ratified it. More than 100 countries are expected to sign the treaty.

The United States, Russia, and other nuclear powers, as well as those depending on the nuclear umbrella, such as Japan and most NATO nations, have not taken part in the talks.

They say a disarmament treaty would not lead to a practical solution.

Pledge to continue nuke ban campaign

July 10, 2017

Hiroshima peace activist vows to continue nuke ban campaign after UN treaty adoption

<https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20170710/p2a/00m/0na/014000c>

HIROSHIMA -- The daughter of a prominent peace activist celebrated the historic nuclear weapons ban treaty, which was adopted at a United Nations conference in New York on July 7, as even disarmament campaigners had long believed such a pact to be "unrealistic."

- **【Related】** A-bomb survivor gives powerful speech after anti-nuke treaty adopted at UN
- **【Related】** Over 120 nations adopt first treaty banning nuclear weapons
- **【Hibakusha Series】**

"We pledge to carry on in unison until nuclear weapons are eradicated from this world," said Haruko Moritaki, the 78-year-old co-director of the Hiroshima Alliance for Nuclear Weapons Abolition, as she read a joint statement from the group out loud during a rally in front of the Atomic Bomb Dome in Hiroshima on July 8. As a peace advocate who has long called for an anti-nuclear weapons agreement, Moritaki saw the deal at the U.N. as a result of "hibakusha" (A-bomb survivors) and citizens working together to convince the world that nuclear weapons are inhumane, and that countries with good intentions accepted their claim.

Moritaki is the second daughter of late peace activist and hibakusha Ichiro Moritaki. She got involved in nuclear disarmament movement after she retired from teaching. After seeing the destruction caused by depleted uranium munitions used in the Iraq War firsthand, Moritaki felt keenly the true meaning of her father's words: "Human beings and nuclear technology cannot coexist."

In March 2010, Moritaki sent a letter emphasizing the need for a nuclear weapons ban treaty to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and received a reply agreeing with her claims. The ICRC's then president Jakob Kellenberger subsequently became the first committee head to appeal for the establishment of a ban, saying that nuclear weapons were a threat to human existence.

However, parties involved in anti-nuclear weapons activities responded coldly to this move. When Moritaki distributed flyers at the U.N. Review Conference for the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, she was showered with harsh criticism by a British disarmament activist that she was putting the cause in a disadvantageous position by making unrealistic demands, and that her action was premature.

Nevertheless, Moritaki persisted, and continued participating in anti-nuclear weapons activities with international nongovernmental organizations.

What motivated the latest U.N. adoption was a series of Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons conferences first held in Norway in 2013, with participants from international NGOs and representatives from over 100 countries. The movement for the adoption of the ban treaty was gaining momentum, while the U.N. review conference was struggling to achieve results.

Moritaki was unable to join the latest conference in New York as her cancer had worsened, but says she was too excited to sleep on the night the treaty was adopted. She said she told her father, "We did it," in her heart.

"I have continued working (for the anti-nuclear weapons movement) while carrying on the hearts of A-bomb victims and those who have passed away before accomplishing their goals," said Moritaki. She is determined to continue calling for ratification of the treaty by non-signatory countries including Japan.

But Japan played no role

July 8, 2017

N-weapons ban pact hailed, but Japan slammed for lack of role

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201707080032.html>

THE ASAHI SHIMBUN

A U.N. treaty to ban the use and possession of nuclear weapons was widely welcomed across Japan on July 8, but reaction was tinged with disappointment that the Japanese government played no role in the effort despite the nation's history of destruction by atomic bombs.

The document, called the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, was formally adopted July 7 at the United Nations headquarters in New York, almost 72 years after the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were leveled by atomic weapons as World War II drew to a close, killing tens of thousands of people. Hiroshima Mayor Kazumi Matsui, in a statement as chairman of the Mayors for Peace group, said, "All countries, including not only nuclear powers but also non-nuclear nations, should welcome this agreement."

Meeting reporters July 8, he said, "I intend to carry out my work from now on to ensure that the treaty has substance."

Many people welcomed the treaty as epoch-making, but there was also disappointment that Japan itself was not involved in the negotiations.

Nagasaki Mayor Tomihisa Taue, in a statement, noted that more than 60 percent of the 193 U.N. member countries supported the treaty.

"I hope that the birth (of the treaty) will generate the huge momentum needed for the eradication of nuclear weapons," he said, while expressing disappointment at the Japanese government's lack of participation in the negotiations.

"It is extremely lamentable as the representative of an A-bombed city," Taue said. "We demand that the Japanese government take leadership in urging the nuclear powers to pursue nuclear disarmament."

The Japanese government is placed in a difficult position on this issue as it relies heavily on the U.S. nuclear umbrella to help shield it from outside aggression.

Sunao Tsuboi, 92, head of an atomic bomb sufferers' organization in Hiroshima Prefecture, also issued a statement, which read, "What atomic bomb sufferers have wished for so many long years has finally emerged in concrete form. But difficulties will still lie ahead until the contents of the treaty achieve the desired effect."

The Japan Confederation of A- and H-Bomb Sufferers Organizations took note of a passage in the treaty that acknowledges the suffering of hibakusha atomic bomb victims.

"It is really a great pleasure," said the statement, which was released by the confederation in a news conference in Tokyo on July 8.

The statement went on to say that the confederation has sought the eradication of nuclear weapons since its establishment in 1956 and that its goal is now finally in sight.

It said that hibakusha will continue to bear witness to the horrors of nuclear destruction and work with citizens worldwide until all nuclear arsenals are eliminated.

In the news conference, Terumi Tanaka, who is 85 and a leading member of the confederation, noted that Japan and the nuclear powers, including the United States, did not participate in the negotiations for the treaty.

"It is lamentable and frustrating. I want to get the message across to a wider audience among citizens of the nuclear powers that we don't need nuclear weapons," said Tanaka, who survived the Aug. 9, 1945, atomic bombing of Nagasaki, three days after Hiroshima was targeted.

(Gen Okamoto contributed to this article.)

What now?

July 8, 2017

A Treaty Is Reached to Ban Nuclear Arms. Now Comes the Hard Part.

By Rick Gladstone *New York Times*, July 7, 2017 <http://tinyurl.com/ycte8q9t>

For the first time in the seven-decade effort to avert a nuclear war, a global treaty has been negotiated that proponents say would, if successful, lead to the destruction of all nuclear weapons and forever prohibit their use.

Negotiators representing two-thirds of the 192-member United Nations finalized the 10-page treaty this week after months of talks.

The document, called the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, was formally adopted on Friday at United Nations headquarters in New York during the final session of the negotiation conference.

It will be open for signature by any member state starting on Sept. 20 during the annual General Assembly and would enter into legal force 90 days after being ratified by 50 countries.

"The world has been waiting for this legal norm for 70 years," said Elayne G. Whyte Gómez, Costa Rica's ambassador to the United Nations in Geneva and chairwoman of the conference, which was broadcast live on the United Nations website.

Cheers and applause erupted among the delegates after the vote was tallied: 122 in favor and one against — the Netherlands, the only NATO member that participated in the conference. Singapore abstained.

The participants did not include any of the world's nine nuclear-armed countries, which conspicuously boycotted the negotiations.

Some critics of the treaty, including the United States and its close Western allies, publicly rejected the entire effort, calling it misguided and reckless, particularly when North Korea is threatening a nuclear-tipped missile strike on American soil.

"We have to be realistic," Nikki R. Haley, the American ambassador to the United Nations, said when the talks began in March. "Is there anyone who thinks that North Korea would ban nuclear weapons?"

In a joint statement released after the treaty was adopted, the United States, Britain and France said, "We do not intend to sign, ratify or ever become party to it."

The statement said that “a purported ban on nuclear weapons that does not address the security concerns that continue to make nuclear deterrence necessary cannot result in the elimination of a single nuclear weapon and will not enhance any country’s security, nor international peace and security.”

Disarmament groups and other proponents of the treaty said they had never expected that any nuclear-armed country would sign it — at least not at first. Rather, supporters hope, the treaty’s widespread acceptance elsewhere will eventually increase the public pressure and stigma of harboring and threatening to use such weapons of unspeakable destruction, and make holdouts reconsider their positions.

“This treaty is a strong categorical prohibition of nuclear weapons and is really rooted in humanitarian law,” said Beatrice Fihn, executive director of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, a Geneva-based coalition of groups that advocated the treaty.

“It provides a path for nuclear-armed states to join,” Ms. Fihn said in an interview on Thursday. “We don’t expect them to sign the treaty right now, but it’s a good starting point for changing perceptions.”

She and other supporters of the treaty contend that the coercive power of such an agreement can exert enormous influence on public and government opinion.

Treaties that banned biological and chemical arms, land mines and cluster bombs have shown how weapons once regarded as acceptable are now widely, if not universally, reviled. That is the kind of outcome sought by proponents of the nuclear ban pact.

“While the treaty itself will not immediately eliminate any nuclear weapons, the treaty can, over time, further delegitimize nuclear weapons and strengthen the legal and political norm against their use,” said Daryl G. Kimball, executive director of the Arms Control Association, a Washington-based group that supports the treaty.

Nuclear weapons have defied attempts to contain their spread since the United States dropped two atomic bombs on Japan in 1945, ending World War II.

The destruction wrought by those weapons helped give rise to the nuclear arms race and the doctrine of deterrence, which holds that the only way to prevent an attack is to assure the destruction of the attacker.

Proponents of deterrence argue that it has helped avert a calamitous global war for more than 70 years.

Besides the United States and Russia, which are believed to have the largest nuclear arsenals, Britain, China, France, India, Pakistan, Israel and North Korea all have nuclear bombs.

Ms. Fihn said the standoff between North Korea and the United States over the North’s nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles illustrated what she called the fallacy that the deterrence theory could keep the peace.

“The theory only works if you are ready to use nuclear weapons, otherwise the other side will call your bluff,” she said. Deterrence, she added, is also “based on a perception that leaders are rational and sane.”

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Under the 1968 Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, signed by nearly all nations, parties are required to “pursue negotiations in good faith” aimed at advancing nuclear disarmament.

The new agreement is partly rooted in the disappointment among non-nuclear-armed nations that the Nonproliferation Treaty’s disarmament aspirations have not worked.

Mr. Kimball called the new treaty “an expression of the deep concern about the enormous risks posed by nuclear weapons and the growing frustration with the failure of the nuclear-armed states to fulfill their nuclear disarmament commitments.”

The new accord would outlaw nuclear weapons use, threat of use, testing, development, production, possession, transfer and stationing in a different country. For nuclear-armed nations that choose to join, the treaty outlines a process for destroying stockpiles and enforcing the countries’ promise to remain free of nuclear weapons.

The basic premise, the treaty’s opening passage states, is a recognition of “the catastrophic humanitarian consequences that would result from any use of nuclear weapons,” and an agreement that their complete elimination “remains the only way to guarantee that nuclear weapons are never used again under any circumstances.”

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Questions and Answers about the Treaty to Ban Nuclear Weapons:<http://www.icanw.org/campaign-news/about-the-treaty-to-prohibit-nuclear-weapons/>

Historic chance for nuke-free world?

July 10, 2017

EDITORIAL: Nuke weapons ban treaty offers historic chance for eradication

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201707100024.html>

In a historic step toward the goal of realizing a world free of nuclear weapons, a U.N. negotiation conference recently adopted the first treaty of its kind for comprehensively banning nuclear weapons, including the possession, use and testing thereof.

Countries will begin signing the pact in September, and it will come into force when it has been ratified by 50 signatories.

One hundred and twenty-two nations, or nearly two-thirds of all U.N. member countries, voted for the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. The United States, Russia, Britain, France, China and other nuclear weapon states, as well as North Korea, boycotted the negotiations.

Countries under the U.S. nuclear umbrella, including Japan, South Korea and North Atlantic Treaty Organization members, sat out the talks, with the exception of the Netherlands.

The act of threatening to use nuclear weapons was added to the list of “don’ts” during the negotiations. That has made it difficult for nations under a nuclear umbrella, to say nothing of states that possess nuclear weapons, to join the treaty. Japan’s ambassador to the United Nations asserted that Tokyo will never sign the pact.

That said, the treaty will embody an international norm. Security policy that relies on the deterrent potential of nuclear arms will no longer remain justifiable under international law when the pact becomes effective.

The treaty is very significant in that regard.

Nuclear-weapon-free zones, inside which nuclear arms are banned, have already been established in Latin America, the South Pacific, Southeast Asia, Africa and Central Asia. If the new treaty establishes the norm that nuclear weapons are illegal, that will apply more pressure on nations that adhere to nuclear arms to switch their policies.

Politicians and the citizens of such nations should realize the inhumane nature of nuclear weapons. Atomic bombs killed more than 200,000 people in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Those who survived the bombings have suffered from the aftereffects of radiation exposure.

Nuclear weapon states conducted more than 2,000 nuclear tests around the globe after World War II ended, thereby exposing many individuals, including members of indigenous peoples in particular, to radiation and nuclear fallout.

The preamble to the new treaty mentions the “unacceptable suffering of and harm caused to the victims of the use of nuclear weapons (hibakusha), as well as of those affected by the testing of nuclear weapons.” The text contains the firm determination that the catastrophic humanitarian consequences resulting from the use of nuclear arms should never be repeated.

The international community was disappointed in this regard by the attitude of the government of Japan, which walked out of the talks at the very beginning. Tokyo is clinging to its security policy of relying on the U.S. nuclear umbrella despite Japan’s status as an A-bombed country.

North Korea, which is rushing to develop nuclear arms and missiles, represents a serious threat.

Pyongyang, for its part, is arguing in response that the nuclear arsenal of the United States is the real threat. There will be lingering risk of the use of nuclear weapons, and we will be no closer to a world without nuclear arms, as long as both parties continue to rely on their nuclear arsenals.

Japan should take the recent moves of various nations, which are striving to make the nuclear weapons ban treaty effective, as an opportunity to escape from the nuclear umbrella and think seriously about how that goal could be achieved.

The nuclear weapons ban treaty has included a provision that allows countries that are not party to the pact to attend meetings of the party states in the capacity of observers.

Japan should actively draw on such opportunities to seek chances to join the treaty at an early date.

July 7, 2017

Editorial: Nuclear weapons ban treaty a step toward realizing nuke-free world

<https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20170707/p2a/00m/0na/016000c>

The adoption of the nuclear weapons ban treaty at the United Nations scheduled for July 7 marks an important step toward a world without nuclear weapons, which humankind should achieve. We support the philosophy behind the move as well as each party's efforts to achieve this ideal.

- **【Related】** 1st draft nuke ban treaty released, 'hibakusha' mentioned
- **【Related】** Hibakusha 'heartbroken' over Japan's opposition to nuke ban treaty
- **【Related】** First treaty banning nuclear weapons expected to be adopted

The adoption of the convention, the first one to legally ban the possession and use of nuclear arms, comes 72 years after the atomic-bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki on Aug. 6 and 9, respectively, which left

hundreds of thousands of people dead. The word "hibakusha," or atomic-bombing survivor, is mentioned in the preamble of the pact.

The international community's firm determination not to repeat these tragedies is the linchpin of the convention.

Skeptics have raised questions over whether the efficacy of the treaty can be ensured.

However, the pact is significant in that it makes nuclear disarmament an international norm.

It is symbolic that the U.N., established with the goal of achieving world peace, called for "the elimination from national armaments of atomic weapons and all other major weapons adaptable to mass destruction" in General Assembly Resolution 1 adopted in January 1946.

However, the United States and the Soviet Union began a nuclear arms race during the Cold War. The number of nuclear warheads all over the world surpassed 70,000 at the peak of the arms race in 1986, enough to render humans extinct dozens of times over.

Nuclear arms reduction efforts were launched out of fear of a nuclear war. As a result, the number of nuclear warheads worldwide has dropped to some 15,000. At the same time, the number of countries that possess nuclear weapons increased from five -- the U.S., Britain, France, China and Russia -- to nine, including Israel, India, Pakistan and North Korea.

North Korea, which began full-scale development of nuclear weapons in the 1990s and has since conducted repeated nuclear tests, poses a serious threat to Japan, and there is growing concern that terrorist organizations could acquire nuclear weapons -- the situation surrounding nuclear arms is becoming increasingly serious. The U.N. pact was drafted to counter this destabilizing trend.

The treaty bans the development, production, possession, deployment, transfer, receipt and use of nuclear weapons as well as threatening to use them. The pact also prohibits assisting any such moves.

Nuclear powers did not participate in negotiations to draft the convention. Since the pact outlaws any threat to use nuclear arms, which is the core of nuclear deterrence, countries that have not signed the treaty will be unlikely to join later.

Still, the convention is of great significance in that 121 countries and regions -- more than 60 percent of the U.N.'s entire membership -- are participating, and thus represent the majority opinion of the international community. The convention will also likely be effective in deterring pre-emptive use of nuclear weapons by nuclear powers.

Emphasis on humanitarian damage caused by nuclear weapons has convinced the international community of the need to outlaw nuclear arms.

Hibakusha in Hiroshima and Nagasaki are still pained physically and mentally. Some of them have been worried about developing cancer.

Some point out that nuclear weapons have not been used since the bombing of Nagasaki because the leaders of nuclear powers have become aware of the weapons' extremely inhumane nature.

The adoption of the nuclear weapons treaty was motivated partly by non-nuclear powers' frustration at nuclear powers' lack of progress in arms reductions. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) obligates nuclear powers to hold nuclear arms reduction talks. The U.S. and Russia have held talks on reducing strategic nuclear weapons but no serious steps toward reductions have been made. The Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) has not come into force because the U.S. has not ratified the pact. The pace of nuclear arms cuts is too slow. At the same time, these powers are continuing to develop and upgrade their arsenals. Nuclear nations' argument that no other country should possess nuclear arms while they themselves are modernizing their stockpiles is far from convincing.

Most U.S. allies -- almost all NATO members, as well as Japan, South Korea and Australia -- did not participate in the weapons ban talks. Japan and other countries that are under the U.S. nuclear umbrella apparently came under pressure from Washington not to join the pact.

Japan has proposed U.N. resolutions on nuclear disarmament for 23 consecutive years since 1994, and successfully had each of them adopted.

Moreover, as the only atomic-bombed country, Japan has served as an intermediary between nuclear and non-nuclear powers. Last year, Japan realized a visit by then U.S. President Barack Obama to Hiroshima. Considering all this, it is indeed regrettable that Japan has not joined the latest pact.

Difficulties in keeping consistency between the NPT, which recognizes the status of nuclear powers, and the nuclear weapons ban convention, which denies their position, will pose a challenge to nuclear powers in joining the treaty.

However, these powers should abandon the thinking that maintaining a nuclear arsenal is a symbol of national greatness, and work seriously on nuclear arms reductions. Otherwise, paving the way for nuclear disarmament is impossible.

The latest convention will establish a ban on the possession of nuclear weapons as an international norm. Nuclear-armed countries would be worthy of their position as major powers only if they can demonstrate not just their military and economic might, but also moral norms. It is hoped that the convention will encourage nuclear powers to be aware of this.

Treaty adopted but "much greater efforts" needed

July 12, 2017

Treaty to ban nuclear weapons is adopted

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2017/07/12/editorials/treaty-ban-nuclear-weapons-adopted/#.WWeFzFFpyou>

A treaty to prohibit nuclear weapons has been adopted at the United Nations with the support of 122 countries. It will be formally signed at the General Assembly session in September and take effect 90 days after it has been ratified by at least 50 nations. The treaty may not produce immediate concrete results.

But **its significance as an antithesis to the idea of nuclear deterrence, which serves as the basis of development and possession of nuclear weapons by some countries, should not be dismissed.**

There are no signs that nuclear weapons powers and countries under the United States' nuclear umbrella, including NATO members, South Korea and Australia, will join the treaty. The U.S., Britain and France issued a joint statement criticizing the treaty as ignoring the reality of the international security environment and declaring that they will not sign it. Japan — the only country in history to suffer nuclear attacks in warfare but is now under the U.S. nuclear umbrella — made it clear that it will not sign the treaty, either. Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida said the treaty is “not consistent with Japan’s basic ways of thinking” on the issue and that Tokyo will instead pursue a framework that engages both nuclear weapons powers and non-nuclear weapons states.

Opponents of the treaty say that since there is no prospect of nations with nuclear arms joining the treaty, it will have no practical effects and will not lead to the reduction or abolition of nuclear arsenals even if it goes into force. But if they believe the treaty is a meaningless document, they are wrong.

The treaty's philosophical and ethical aspects should not be dismissed. In the preamble, the treaty highlights "the risks posed by the continued existence of nuclear weapons, including from any nuclear weapon detonation by accident, miscalculation or design" and emphasizes that "these risks concern the security of all humanity." It declares that "all states share the responsibility to prevent any use of nuclear weapons" and acknowledges "the ethical imperatives for nuclear disarmament and the urgency of achieving and maintaining a nuclear weapon-free world." The treaty says that such a world is "a global public good of the highest order, serving both national and collective security interests."

The treaty represents a paradigm shift that looks at "the security of all humanity" from a wider perspective, departing from a conventional approach of national security mainly through reliance on military activities. It was born out of concerns "about the catastrophic humanitarian consequences that would result from any use of nuclear weapons." The preamble says that "the catastrophic consequences of nuclear weapons ... pose grave implications for human survival, the environment, socio-economic development, the global economy, food security and the health of current and future generations," and refers to victims of the 1945 U.S. atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki as well as victims of nuclear tests by mentioning "the unacceptable suffering of and harm caused to the victims of the use of nuclear weapons (hibakusha), as well as of those affected by the testing of nuclear weapons." There have been treaties to ban biological and chemical weapons, which are characterized as weapons of mass destruction (WMD), but not to prohibit nuclear weapons, another form of WMD. The newly adopted Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons fills this gap. It prohibits the development, testing, production, acquisition, transferring, receiving, possessing and stockpiling of nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. Significantly, it also prohibits the use or threat to use nuclear weapons — the latter part representing a clear challenge to the idea of nuclear deterrence, or attempts by nuclear weapons states to seek to prevent a nuclear attack against them and their allies by indicating their readiness to use their nuclear arsenals in retaliation. Most significantly, the treaty brands nuclear weapons as illegal, inhumane weapons of absolute evil. It should have the effect of leading people who live in nuclear weapons states and countries under the U.S. nuclear umbrella to reconsider nuclear weapons from an ethical viewpoint — a factor that will help push forward global efforts to reduce and abolish nuclear arms.

The treaty has its weaknesses. It does not offer a practical approach on how to prod nuclear weapons states to join it. It contains no mechanism to verify the reduction and abolition of nuclear weapons. Nor does it provide a solution to the risk of nuclear weapons being used by accident or miscalculation, or by terrorists. The adoption of the treaty underlines the need for much greater efforts to find effective ways to achieve nuclear disarmament.

Five-way talks on North Korea's nuke program?

July 13, 2017

Moon adviser proposes five-way talks on North Korea's nuclear program

JJI

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2017/07/13/asia-pacific/moon-adviser-proposes-five-way-talks-north-koreas-nuclear-program/#.WWcillFpyos>

SEOUL – An aide to South Korean President Moon Jae-in has proposed that five-way talks be held among Japan, the United States, China, Russia and South Korea in dealing with North Korea's nuclear program. Given that North Korea is refusing to take part in the existing six-way format among Tokyo, Washington, Beijing, Moscow, Seoul and Pyongyang, the other five nations in the dialogue framework should hold a meeting to fill the gaps in their positions and draw up a common strategy, Moon Chung-in, special presidential adviser on unification, foreign affairs and national security, said at a seminar held in Seoul on Wednesday.

The five countries should discuss what incentives they can offer to North Korea in case Pyongyang freezes its nuclear facilities and dismantles them in a verifiable manner, he said.

Moon Chung-in said he had expected such a five-way meeting may take place on the occasion of the two-day summit of the Group of 20 advanced and emerging economies in Hamburg, Germany, through Friday. In reality, however, it was not held at the time, he said.

The adviser said that the South Korean government should propose five-way talks, adding that he hopes such a session will be held sooner or later.

In favour of a North-East Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone

July 15, 2017

Japan should abandon nuclear umbrella

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2017/07/15/commentary/japan-commentary/japan-abandon-nuclear-umbrella/#.WWo101Fpyos>

by Mitsuaki Takami

Special To The Japan Times

NAGASAKI – When the atomic bomb exploded over Nagasaki on Aug. 9, 1945, my mother was pregnant with me. She lived one or two mountains away from Urakami, the hypocenter area. Three days after the bombing, she went to her parents' home in Urakami and was exposed to radiation. I lost my grandmother, two of my aunts, my aunt's husband and, 13 years later, one of my cousins. The body of one of my aunts was not even found. I still remember clearly how my cousin was skin and bones when he died. I became a priest and trained future priests at the Major Seminary of Fukuoka for 30 years. As a person of faith in an atomic-bombed country with a pacifist Constitution, I have a strong desire to abolish nuclear weapons. Japan is now faced with two serious realities concerning nuclear weapons. One is that Japan regrettably did not join the U.N. negotiations for the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, and will not be able to join the treaty so long as it is under the nuclear umbrella of the United States. The other is that North Korea is charging ahead in pursuit of becoming a nuclear power and the military tension in Northeast Asia is running extremely high.

This situation entails Japan renewing its fundamental thinking on what nuclear weapons are all about. We hear accusations that North Korea's activities violate U.N. Security Council resolutions. However, they tend to be superficial because such resolutions do not question all nuclear weapons, including those possessed by Security Council members, and because North Korea justifies its nuclear armament as

necessary to defend against nuclear threats from other states. North Korea likewise has survivors of the Nagasaki and Hiroshima bombs.

Hibakusha have not only spoken about their suffering but have also called for “No More Hibakusha,” believing that nobody should ever experience the same suffering. I want the Japanese government to consider why nuclear proliferation is progressing in Northeast Asia despite the memories of the atomic bombings and how this is connected with Japan’s dependence on nuclear deterrence. North Korea also needs to understand what kind of weapons nuclear weapons are.

While the government admits nuclear weapons are inhumane, it continues to rely on the nuclear umbrella, which justifies using nuclear weapons for the purpose of retaliation. Any exchange of nuclear weapons would undoubtedly cause catastrophic consequences in North Korea and Japan, even more horrible than what Nagasaki and Hiroshima experienced.

Despite this contradiction, the government continues this policy. We understand that Japan is in a serious security environment. But the government has failed for decades to exert itself and improve the environment so that it can end its reliance on the nuclear umbrella. This inaction must now be strictly scrutinized.

Recently, representatives of 124 people of faith in Japan, including myself, submitted to Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida a statement entitled “People of Faith in Japan Call for Japan to Stop Relying on the U.S. Nuclear Umbrella and to Move toward the Establishment of a Northeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone.” The establishment of such a zone (NEA-NWFZ) would offer a breakthrough to the current difficult circumstances. As the statement says, “the policy to establish a NEA-NWFZ enables Japan to leave the ‘nuclear umbrella’ while ensuring its national security.” Many scholars and researchers have already been making the same argument. In Nagasaki where I live, the Research Center for Nuclear Weapons Abolition, Nagasaki University (RECNA), proposed a NWFZ with a three-plus-three arrangement, in which three countries — North Korea, South Korea and Japan — form a geographic NWFZ, while the other three countries — the U.S., Russia and China — respect the zone and provide legally binding negative security assurances to the former three. Japan would no longer need the nuclear umbrella to defend itself against nuclear threats from China or North Korea, while North Korea, released from nuclear threats from the U.S., would no longer have to stick to its nuclear program. In an encouraging move, Ramesh Thakur of Australian National University gave a similar discussion in his June 28 opinion piece in *The Japan Times*. RECNA thinks this arrangement is still feasible today, at a time when North Korea has already conducted five nuclear tests.

Even if Japan actually proposed the establishment of a NEA-NWFZ, it would not be realized immediately. The histories of the five existing NWFZs show that it took at least 10 years to conclude such a treaty after one of the concerned states initially proposed it. Still, by proposing a NEA-NWFZ, Japan can demonstrate its will to shift its security policy from nuclear-dependent policies to nuclear-free ones. Such a shift would enable Japan to join and promote the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, just concluded in New York on July 7.

From the viewpoint of a person of faith, this policy shift is a minimum requirement for Japan, the only country that has experienced wartime atomic bombings and has heard ever-lasting hibakusha’s voices calling for “No More Hibakusha” after surviving a hellish catastrophe. The following passage in our statement expresses the origin of our religious spirit on nuclear weapon issues: “Any use of nuclear weapons brings about catastrophic humanitarian consequences, and is against our religious values, moral principles. ... Therefore, we believe nuclear weapons abolition is a spiritual imperative.”

Mitsuaki Takami is the Catholic archbishop of Nagasaki.

Hiroshima parade celebrates ban treaty

July 16, 2017

Hiroshima parade hails nuclear ban treaty

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20170716_10/

People in the atomic-bombed city of Hiroshima held a parade on Sunday welcoming the adoption of a legally binding treaty to ban nuclear weapons.

The treaty was approved on July 7th at the UN headquarters in New York with support from 122 countries and territories.

The United States, Russia and other nuclear powers, as well as those depending on the nuclear umbrella, such as Japan and most NATO nations, did not take part in the talks.

About 30 members of civic groups, as well as atomic bomb survivors, took part in the parade.

They held large paper cranes and placards calling for a world without nuclear weapons, and marched for about an hour to the children's peace monument in Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park.

Takae Hironaka visited the UN during treaty negotiations.

She said she wants to share the good news of the treaty, and hopes to increase efforts toward nuclear abolition.

Japan to host meeting on nuclear disarmament

July 24, 2017

Japan to host meeting on nuclear disarmament

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20170724_04/

Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida says Japan's government will invite **experts from nuclear and non-nuclear nations to a nuclear disarmament meeting** to be held by Japan later this year.

Speaking in Kobe, western Japan on Sunday Kishida said the Japanese government has selected 16 experts to attend the meeting, including some from Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

He said nations possessing nuclear weapons, and those without them have increasingly been at odds in recent years.

Kishida said the stalemate over nuclear weapons won't change unless nuclear powers join efforts to create a nuclear weapons-free world.

Japan opposed a legally binding treaty to ban nuclear weapons that was approved at the UN on July 7th.

The United States and Russia are not expected to join the treaty.

Kishida said the major objective of the nuclear disarmament meeting will be to rebuild trust between nuclear and non-nuclear nations.

He told reporters that he hopes the panel members will discuss ways to develop cooperation between the 2 sides.

Japan hopes to recommend the outcome of the debate to a preparatory meeting for the 2020 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference to be held next April.

N.Korea threatens US with "pre-emptive nuclear strike"

July 26, 2017

N.Korea warns of pre-emptive nuclear strike on US

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20170726_29/

North Korea says it will launch a "pre-emptive nuclear strike" against the United States if its enemies miscalculate.

North Korea's armed forces minister, Pak Yong Sik, issued the warning at a meeting in Pyongyang on Wednesday to mark the 64th anniversary of the ceasefire in the Korean War, which is Thursday.

Pak said North Korea has become a strong nuclear and missile country referring to what he called a successful test-firing of an intercontinental ballistic missile earlier this month.

He said that if its enemies misjudge North Korea's strategic status, the military will conduct a pre-emptive nuclear strike on the heart of the US without any prior warning and eliminate it from the Earth.

The meeting was attended by most members of the leadership, not including the country's leader Kim Jong Un. State-run television covered the gathering.

On Tuesday, the Director of the Korean People's Army General Political Department, Hwang Pyong So, also issued a warning to the US at a meeting of the People's Army, which was held for the first time in 2 years. He quoted Kim Jong Un as saying that the military will push aggressors into a grave of ruin if its enemies recklessly provoke North Korea again.

These confrontational remarks are seen as aimed at tightening control on the people.

"High noon on the roof of the world"

July 30, 2017

It's high noon on the roof the world

The territorial standoff in the Himalayas is a lose-lose proposition for both India and China

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2017/07/30/commentary/world-commentary/high-noon-roof-world/#.WX7mclFpyov>

by Ramesh Thakur

CANBERRA – What on earth is going on near the roof of the world? Since mid-June, the world's two most populous countries have been eyeball to eyeball in a tense military standoff where their borders meet up with tiny Bhutan. The narrow Doklam Plateau is a 90-km strip at an altitude of over 4,000 meters that China claims as part of Tibet. Bhutan insists it is the rightful claimant. For decades its foreign policy has been "guided" and its sovereign interests protected by India.

The 1962 syndrome seems alive and well in both China and India. Fifty-five years ago they fought a brief war over a border dispute. The complete rout of India was a bitter humiliation that is deeply scarred on the national collective consciousness. In 1979 Chinese troops attacked and threatened to teach Vietnam the same lesson as India in 1962 but got a bloody nose instead. Beijing is at it again, warning India not to forget the lessons of history on pain of a repeat.

The mix of internalized humiliation on one side and chest-thumping bravado on the other is a dangerous cocktail, involving two proud nuclear-armed neighbors with a billion-strong population, each with a rich and storied history and civilization. But 2017 is not 1962 when neither had nuclear weapons and now both do. As India has discovered vis-a-vis Pakistan, paradoxically this confers an asymmetric advantage on the militarily less powerful neighbor. The risk of spiraling escalation that goes nuclear induces caution, tempering the instinct to inflict military punishment on the perceived weaker country.

It also attracts the world's attention, for a nuclear war would be catastrophic for the entire planet. This provides a vivid reminder of the strategic benefits of the recently adopted nuclear weapons prohibition treaty that was opposed by both China and India (as well as Japan).

Second, the street-smart Narendra Modi is no Jawaharlal Nehru. In acquiescing to China's takeover of Tibet in 1951, Nehru saddled India with a permanent strategic disadvantage vis-a-vis China. Easily flattered to deceive, the vainglorious Nehru suffered delusions of global moral leadership and, encouraged by courtier generals, engaged in reckless adventurism to provoke the 1962 disaster. For all his tendency to talk big and act small, in this crisis Modi has held his tongue and it is the Chinese side that has issued wild inflammatory ultimatums against India's measured and circumspect statements. Still, India has given no indication of backing down from its firm defense of Bhutan's claim and worse, it has a history of inflexibility and ideological rigidity on territorial disputes. The recent package settlement with Bangladesh was a welcome departure.

Third, China economic position is a totally different from 1962. Paradoxically again, China has a lot more to lose today. A war with a nuclear-armed neighbor would disrupt China's development. Beijing is also at the risk of simultaneous land and sea border quarrels with many neighbors from Northeast Asia through the South China Sea (plus growing tensions over North Korea). Diplomatic costs quickly begin to mount to negate decades of patient diplomacy that emphasized China's peaceful rise. The problem may be that

China lacks a historical, philosophical or literary tradition of acting as a great power in a system of great powers. Beijing will have to come to terms with the fact that India is too big to be a tributary state. Perhaps China was trying on land the same strategy of incremental expansion, reclamation and construction of dual-purpose facilities that has worked in the South China Sea. But disputed land areas are an entirely different proposition. Certainly Bhutan alleges and India supports charges that China attempted to alter the status quo by stealthily constructing roads. Maybe the ferocity of Beijing's reactions is due to being caught out.

Outsiders have difficulty assessing competing claims. Amidst heightened nationalist passions, China does not permit free expressions of opinion. The hard-line Global Times has led the testosterone charge against India. But the Indian press has not been more restrained in its breathless coverage of China's perfidy. But at least there are the occasional Indian voices noting some merit to China's version, both within India and outside.

India's army chief, Gen. Bipin Rawat, was less than helpful in saying publicly, a week before Doklam erupted, that his forces could fight a 2½-front war. Unbelievably for a country with nuclear arms, a million-strong military and possibly the world's largest purchase of armaments, India has a part-time defense minister. The previous defense minister in the Congress government was so determined to avoid bribery scandals that he refused to sanction essential military purchases. Meanwhile, with all key foreign policy decisions centralized under Modi, his able foreign minister is reduced to being the minister for consular services, rescuing Indians caught in difficulties abroad.

There have been more scandals in relation to India's defense forces involving generals in the last five years than in the previous 50. India's social cohesion is also under greater threat under the Modi government, with minority groups feeling under siege. A war with China would not merely test India's military power, defense preparedness and social cohesion; it would also be a major setback to Modi's goal to make India a manufacturing and information technology-led industrial powerhouse.

The legal issues in the dispute are complex and technical, involving treaties between Britain and China in 1890, pacts and understandings between Bhutan and India, the history of Bhutan-Tibet relations and China's suzerainty of Tibet. The narrow geographical corridor is strategically vital to India for access to its northeastern states, as well as its credibility as the de facto guarantor of Bhutan's sovereignty. Doklam is less strategically vital to China than other disputed sectors along its 4,000-km border with India, but perhaps Beijing wants to deflate uppity India's growing military links with the U.S., Japan and Australia. China might also be miffed that India boycotted its recent Belt and Road Initiative summit. And it may want to signal to small countries in the neighborhood that the costs of siding with India are unacceptably high.

All things considered, the standoff seems to be a lose-lose proposition for both powers. That might well prove the reason why it ends without bloodshed. But first both sides need to de-escalate the stakes (territorial sovereignty for China, national security for India) and rhetoric in favor of diplomacy.

Ramesh Thakur is a professor in the Crawford School of Public Policy, Australian National University.

Douglas Roche on the new ban treaty

Why Canada Should Sign the Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapons

By Douglas Roche, Special to the Globe and Mail, July 29, 2017

<http://tinyurl.com/yd65caa7>

Douglas Roche is a former senator and a former Canadian ambassador for disarmament and honorary citizen of Hiroshima.

I was 16 when the first atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in early August, 1945. It was only years later, when I visited Japan as a member of Parliament, that I realized the unspeakable horror and scale of destruction possible in the new nuclear age.

That experience changed my life as I began to understand that the threat to use the immense killing power of modern nuclear weapons challenges all human rights. Through the years, the movement to abolish nuclear weapons ebbed and flowed, and few people thought the elimination of all 15,000 nuclear weapons was a practical political goal.

But new hope emerged July 7, when 122 countries – 63 per cent of all countries – adopted at the United Nations a Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. The new treaty prohibits the development, testing, production, manufacturing and possession of nuclear weapons. Nuclear weapons have been unconditionally stigmatized as standing outside international humanitarian law.

The treaty was achieved through the work of leading states – such as Ireland, Austria and Mexico – working in collaboration with highly informed members of civil society. They recognized the “catastrophic humanitarian consequences” of any use of nuclear weapons, which would pose grave implications for the environment, the global economy, the health of current and future generations and for human survival itself.

When 50 countries have ratified it, the new treaty will enter into force and all the signatory states will be committed to “measures for the verified, time-bound and irreversible elimination of nuclear-weapon programmes.”

The UN High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Izumi Nakamitsu, has hailed the “historic adoption” of the treaty as “a beacon of hope for all those who have dedicated their lives to the pursuit of a nuclear-weapon-free world.”

However, the road ahead will be difficult because the nuclear-weapons states oppose the new treaty, just as they have refused to honour their legal obligations under the longstanding Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty to negotiate “in good faith” the elimination of nuclear weapons. A statement issued by the United States, Britain and France – the three Western nuclear-weapons states – arrogantly said they “do not intend to sign, ratify or ever become party to [the new treaty].”

Thus, world opinion is split between those who believe the military doctrine of nuclear deterrence (“mutual assured destruction”) is necessary to preserve peace and those who hold that nuclear weapons, with their immense destructive power, are the major threat to peace.

The majority of countries now agree that the faulty doctrine of nuclear deterrence must be replaced with a sincere desire to build a global security architecture without nuclear weapons. This is a struggle of titanic proportions.

It is dismaying that the Government of Canada, the first country in the world to declare it would not develop nuclear weapons, took a stand in Parliament opposing the new treaty as “premature.” How can it be “premature” to ban nuclear weapons after seven decades of their existence?

The real reason for Canada’s opposition is because the U.S. government instructed its partners in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization to resist on the grounds that the treaty “delegitimizes the concept of nuclear deterrence.” That is exactly the aim of the treaty advocates, who maintain that the measure is a head-on rejection of nuclear hegemony.

The new treaty also shores up the non-proliferation treaty, which is continually being weakened by the major powers’ refusal to abide by its obligation to negotiate the elimination of nuclear arsenals. Prohibiting nuclear weapons is an essential step toward their elimination. Thus, the Government of Canada should sign and ratify the new prohibition treaty as a concrete step toward the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons.

The government must face the fact that NATO nuclear policies are a huge obstacle to achieving a nuclear-weapons-free world. Canada once tried to get NATO to change these policies; it should try again. It will not be easy to challenge the NATO doctrine, but it must be done because it is right to do so. It is wrong for NATO to maintain the nuclear weapons doctrine when most of the world wants to prohibit such instruments of evil.

As an old man now looking back in the distance to the horrors of Hiroshima, I never want to lose my sense of hope that an enlightened humanity can fight back against the shrill voices of fear still clamouring for the false security of nuclear weapons.

Has the "Revolution of Thought" progressed?

August 7, 2017

Editorial: Countries must not neglect responsibility for nuclear weapons abolition

<https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20170807/p2a/00m/0na/026000c>

On Aug. 6, 1947, on the second anniversary of the U.S. atomic bombing of Hiroshima, then mayor of the city Shinzo Hamai read out the city’s first ever Peace Declaration in the blazing sun.

- **【Hibakusha Series】**
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In the statement, Hamai underscored the need for a "Revolution of Thought" toward getting rid of what he called "horrible weapons" (atomic bombs) in order to achieve lasting peace. He then said, "... because of this atomic bomb, the people of the world have become aware that a global war in which atomic energy

could be used would lead to the end of our civilization and extinction of mankind," according to his memoir, "Genbaku Shicho" ("Mayor of the atomic-bombed city").

Probably because of the sense of tension with which he addressed the world from a corner of a country that was defeated in World War II, Hamai recalled that he felt as if his voice were not his own.

Seventy years later, on the occasions of the 72nd anniversaries of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki on Aug. 6 and 9, respectively, one cannot help but wonder whether the "Revolution of Thought" has since progressed.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which came into force in the 1970s, allows the five nuclear powers -- the United States, Britain, France, China and Russia -- to possess such arms. However, India and Pakistan acquired nuclear weapons in the 1990s, and Israel is widely viewed as a de-facto nuclear power.

In addition, North Korea has repeatedly conducted nuclear and missile tests and even threatened to use nuclear weapons against Japan and the United States, highlighting the deadlock in the "Revolution of Thought" and the NPT regime.

Amid such moves, about 120 countries adopted the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons at the United Nations this past July. However, not only the United States and other nuclear powers, but also Japan and South Korea -- both under the U.S. nuclear umbrella -- as well as NATO members opposed the pact.

This is apparently because the treaty not just bans the possession and use of nuclear arms but is also critical of the traditional nuclear deterrence theory. Tokyo appears to have deemed that the country could not support the pact amid the growing threat posed by Pyongyang.

In May 2016, however, Japan invited then U.S. President Barack Obama to Hiroshima, where the world's only atomic-bombed country renewed its vow for a world without nuclear weapons. Even though Obama's successor Donald Trump is pursuing nuclear arms expansion, it appears out of place for Japan to put the brakes on moves toward nuclear weapons abolition.

It is only natural that organizations of A-bomb survivors, or "hibakusha" in Japanese, expressed displeasure with the Japanese government's response to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. Setsuko Thurlow, a hibakusha who participated in the talks on the treaty, lamented that she deeply felt that she had been betrayed and abandoned by her home country.

"The Japanese government is rigidly tied down" by many countries, according to Yasuyoshi Komizo, secretary-general of the "Mayors for Peace." Japan has faced pressure from the United States and the threat posed by North Korea. Moreover, it is difficult for nuclear powers and their allies to support the pact that prioritizes a ban on the possession and use of nuclear arms.

To make it easier for nuclear powers to sign the pact, Komizo proposed to incorporate "verification measures," to which nuclear powers attach particular importance, in the pact, during discussions on the draft of the treaty at the United Nations.

"There is some criticism, but the fact that the treaty was created is a major achievement. The wording of the pact is something that is difficult to criticize. I hope countries that have not participated in the treaty would boldly transform their policies," Komizo said.

In deciding not to participate in the pact, the Japanese government appears to have sided with the United States rather than hibakusha. If the Japanese government were to say it is a misunderstanding, then Tokyo should take concrete action to demonstrate its will to rid the world of nuclear stockpiles. The ultimate goals of both the NPT and the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons are nuclear abolition. Japan should endeavor to ease the international conflict over these two pacts and facilitate international

cooperation toward elimination of nuclear arms and reconsider its own response to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

In response to the threat posed by North Korea, some people might say, "Countries threatening the world with nuclear weapons should be countered with nuclear weapons." However, as long as nuclear arms exist, similar crises could occur. It should be realistic for and sincere of Japan to make its utmost efforts toward nuclear abolition while not ruling out nuclear deterrence as-is.

The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons is not the only way to rid the world of nuclear arms. But have nuclear powers opposing the treaty fulfilled their responsibility for nuclear arms reductions provided for by the NPT? Non-nuclear powers moved to adopt the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons because little progress had been made in nuclear disarmament. Nuclear powers' negligence and lack of a sense of crisis should be called into question.

With regard to the "security of all humanity" mentioned in the nuclear weapons ban treaty's preamble, Mitsuru Kurosawa, professor at Osaka Jogakuin College, said, "The time has come when countries should consider security arrangements on a global scale in addition to those between individual countries. We should change our way of thinking." A second "Revolution of Thought" is now apparently necessary while keeping in mind risks involving nuclear weapon detonation by accident.

In a message he contributed to the 1947 Hiroshima Peace Declaration, Douglas MacArthur, supreme commander for the Allied Powers, warned that weapons that could annihilate human beings could be used in war and that Hiroshima served as a warning to all people against such a situation, emphasizing that the warning should not be ignored.

The United States should take to heart the meaning of MacArthur's message as the only country that has used nuclear weapons in war.

Depending on deterrence to avoid nuclear war is too dangerous

VOX POPULI: Nuclear weapons ban treaty, not deterrence, may be our best hope

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201708070017.html>

Vox Populi, Vox Dei is a daily column that runs on Page 1 of The Asahi Shimbun.

What should you do if you come under a nuclear attack?

Duck and hide under a desk and cover the back of your head with your hands. That was what children at schools in the United States were instructed to do during atomic air raid drills in the 1950s.

It was the Cold War era, and it was deemed vital to prepare citizens for a possible nuclear attack by the Soviet Union.

Comic books distributed to schools for the "Duck and Cover" campaign offered the following advice.

"Outdoors, duck behind walls and trees. Even in a hollow in the ground."

This episode is included in Allan Winkler's "Life Under a Cloud: American Anxiety about the Atom."

More than a half century on, there are still many stockpiles of nuclear weapons in the world even though the Cold War ended years ago.

We have so far been saved from a nuclear war. Is it because of nuclear deterrence--fear of nuclear retaliation deterring the use of nuclear weapons?

It may not have been the case. We may have only been lucky.

This view seems to be supported by an intriguing interview with former Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf published on July 27 by The Mainichi Shimbun newspaper. In the interview, Musharraf said he seriously considered the use of nuclear weapons against India in 2002.

At that time, tensions were surging between the two nuclear powers following the 2001 terrorist attack on the Indian parliament.

Musharraf said he spent many sleepless nights, asking himself whether and how he would or could use nuclear weapons if something happened to demand such action. He was facing a possibility of having to take action that could cause millions of deaths.

If this is what is called deterrence, it is apparently built on a dangerously precarious basis.

Deterrence is a strategy premised on the assumption that both sides think in a cool-headed and rational manner.

But a leader who is usually a calm, unruffled person could lose his or her senses during a crisis.

There are also leaders whose ability to make rational decisions is already in serious doubt.

The reality is that depending on deterrence for averting a nuclear war is too dangerous.

Seventy-two years since the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, a global treaty to ban nuclear weapons that was formally adopted on July 7 at a United Nations conference offers new hope.

The treaty reflects a strong determination to make sure that there will never be another victim of a nuclear attack.

It could and should be promoted as an answer to the threat of nuclear arms that is far superior to deterrence.

--The Asahi Shimbun, Aug. 6

72nd anniversary

August 6, 2017

Hiroshima 72nd A-bomb anniversary

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20170806_12/

Tens of thousands of people gathered Sunday in Hiroshima to reflect on a tragedy that changed the course of history. They're marking the 72nd anniversary since the US detonated an atomic bomb over the city in 1945.

About 50,000 people gathered at the Peace Memorial Park to honor the victims. Survivors known as Hibakusha joined the crowd. Their average age is now 81.

Representatives from 80 countries also attended.

People observed a moment of silence at 8:15 AM, the exact time the bomb hit the city.

Officials placed a list of 308,725 victims in a cenotaph.

It includes the names of 5,530 people who died or were confirmed to have died in the past year.

Hiroshima Mayor Kazumi Matsui delivered a declaration of peace. He quoted from survivors, who described the scenes of devastation and despair that followed the bombing and who spoke of their desire for peace.

The mayor said "This hell is not a thing of the past. As long as nuclear weapons exist and policymakers

threaten their use, their horror could leap into our present at any moment. You could find yourself suffering their cruelty."

Matsui referred to a treaty to ban nuclear weapons that was adopted by 122 countries and territories at the UN.

Non-signatories are expected to include nuclear powers such as the US and Russia and countries that rely on the nuclear umbrella, including Japan.

Matsui urged the Japanese government to help bridge the divide over the treaty.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said "To truly achieve a world without nuclear weapons, it is essential for both countries with and without nuclear weapons to work together. Our country abides by its 3 non-nuclear principles of not possessing, producing or allowing nuclear arms on its land. And we are determined to lead the world by closely working with the 2 sides with this goal in mind."

Abe said that to do this, Japan needs to pass on the memory of its tragic experiences as one shared by all human beings across generations and borders.

Abe also expressed his commitment to the Review Conference of the conventional nuclear disarmament treaty in 2020. The treaty allows some countries to have nuclear weapons, but commits all to eventual disarmament.

Japan will also mark the bombing of Nagasaki on Wednesday.

Hoping to pass on a message to young people

August 3, 2017

Hibakusha: Passing on a message to the young generation

<https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20170803/p2a/00m/0sp/019000c>

In August each year, A-bomb survivor Koko Kondo, 72, a resident of Hyogo Prefecture, has taught in a program taking students from Kyoto's Ritsumeikan University and American University in the United States to Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Since the program began in 1995, over 700 people have participated in the study tours. However, since the term of the Ritsumeikan faculty member in charge is ending, the program is due to finish this year.

- **【Hibakusha Series】**

Volunteers independently launched the program, which explores nuclear-related sites, to mark 50 years since the end of the Pacific War. It was formally adopted as a course at both educational institutions in 1997. Students visit the Kyoto Museum for World Peace at Ritsumeikan University, take part in ceremonies in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and listen to the testimonies of hibakusha, or A-bomb survivors. This year 40 students were to take part in the program running from Aug. 1 to 10.

Kond, a graduate of American University, arranged to meet a group of young people on Aug. 2, with the desire to have the younger generation spread hope for the elimination of nuclear weapons.

Kondo was exposed to radiation from the atomic bombing of Hiroshima alongside her parents when she was 8 months old. After graduating from high school, she studied at American University. She learned

about the study tours through news reports in 1996, and was happily surprised to hear that students from her alma mater were coming to Japan to learn about the atomic bombings.

When she was studying in the U.S., the Vietnam War was being fought, and she had been unable to mention that she was an A-bomb survivor -- she knew there was a strong tendency in the U.S. to justify the dropping of the atomic bombs, on the grounds that they ended the war and prevented further deaths.

After returning Japan, Kondo contacted Ritsumeikan University and met with history professor Peter Kuznick of American University and others in Hiroshima, and they hit it off. From 1997, she served as an instructor to speak about the experiences she and her parents went through, seeing it as a valuable opportunity to convey the thoughts of an A-bomb survivor to students from Japan and the U.S. She guided them along the banks of a river where A-bomb victims had sought relief, and at the memorial tower where the remains of victims are buried, and told them, "Observe this with your own eyes, and tell others what you have felt." She heard that some of the students who took part went on to work for NGOs or become university researchers. She hopes they will convey the thoughts of hibakusha at the grassroots level.

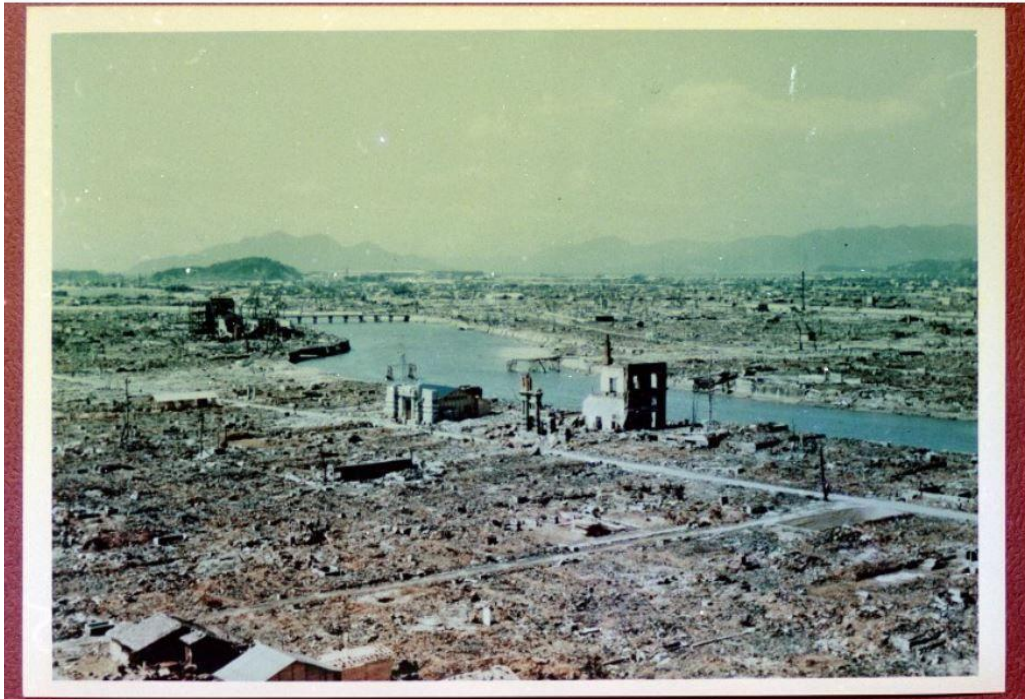
Atsushi Fujioka, a specially appointed professor in charge of the program at Ritsumeikan University, is set to move to a part-time position from next academic year, and so the program is being held for the last time this year. Some at American University have lamented the end of the program, and Fujioka says he wants efforts to continue.

"I want efforts to have students think about peace together to continue, for example by seeking the cooperation of another university," he says.

Kondo commented, "Last year U.S. President Barack Obama came to Hiroshima. Twenty years ago, when the program started, I don't think public opinion in the U.S. would have allowed it. Our appeal is reaching American society."

Though the program is coming to an end, Kondo hopes to keep delivering her message to the young generation of Japanese and Americans.

Recently discovered photos: Hiroshima in 1946



The former Japan Saving Bank Hiroshima Branch is seen at center left, located around 430 meters south of the A-bomb hypocenter. Seen to the center right is the Hiroshima branch of the Hiroshima Prefectural Agricultural Association. (Photo courtesy of Hiroshima University's Research Institute for Radiation Biology and Medicine)



The former Japan Saving Bank Hiroshima Branch is seen at center left, located around 430 meters south of the A-bomb hypocenter. Seen to the center right is the Hiroshima branch of the Hiroshima Prefectural Agricultural Association. (Photo courtesy of Hiroshima University's Research Institute for Radiation Biology and Medicine)

August 7, 2017

New photos of post-bombing central Hiroshima discovered

https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20170807/p2a/00m/0na/016000c#cxrecs_s

HIROSHIMA -- Two color photos of an area within a 500-meter radius from the hypocenter of the Hiroshima atomic bombing taken sometime around the spring of 1946 have been found here.

- **【Related】** Hiroshima marks 72nd A-bomb anniversary with eyes on ban treaty
- **【Related】** The Mainichi opens int'l essay contest on Hiroshima A-bomb play 'The Face of Jizo'

The recently discovered photos capture areas surrounding the head office of what is now Hiroshima Gas Co., located approximately 210 meters south of the A-bomb hypocenter, and the then Japan Saving Bank Hiroshima Branch, about 430 meters south of the hypocenter. They are part of documents that were returned to Japan in and after 1973 by the U.S. Armed Forces Institute of Pathology, and are believed to have been taken by the U.S. Strategic Bombing Survey, which studied the power of atomic bombs. While areas near the bomb's hypocenter remain devastated even about eight months after the bombing on Aug. 6, 1945, the photos depict the city's recovery from the catastrophe such as barracks built on scorched land.

Assistant professor Akiko Kubota at Hiroshima University's Research Institute for Radiation Biology and Medicine discovered the photos that were not numbered or included in a list of A-bomb-related documents. They are believed to have been taken from the Hiroshima Fukoku-kan building, which was the tallest structure in the area at the time.

Kubota says she'll work on clearing issues regarding rights to the photos to have them released to the public.

Nagasaki 2017

August 9, 2017

Nagasaki marks 72 years since atomic bombing

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20170809_15/

People are gathering in Nagasaki for its annual Peace Memorial Ceremony. In 1945, the city was leveled by an American atomic bomb, killing more than 70,000 people in that year alone.

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe is scheduled to attend along with representatives from 58 countries and territories.

A list of 175,743 victims will be placed into a stone vault.

The list includes the names of 3,551 who died or were confirmed to have died in the past year as a result of bombing.

Participants will observe a moment of silence at 11:02, the exact moment the bomb was dropped.

The mayor of Nagasaki Tomihisa Taue reads a peace declaration every year at the ceremony.

This year, Taue is expected to refer to a United Nations treaty legally banning nuclear weapons adopted by 122 countries and territories last month.

Nuclear states and countries that depend on them for protection, including Japan, did not take part in the talks.

Taue is expected to encourage the Japanese government to bridge the divide over the treaty.

The average age of the survivors, also known as hibakusha is over 81 years old.

So there is a sense of urgency in their wish to make Nagasaki the last place hit by an atomic bomb.

Nagasaki, Japan and the nuclear ban

August 9, 2017

Nagasaki mayor criticizes Japan's absence from nuclear ban pact

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201708090009.html>

THE ASAHI SHIMBUN

NAGASAKI--The mayor of Nagasaki strongly urged the Japanese government to sign the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons at a ceremony marking the 72nd anniversary of the atomic bombing of this city on Aug. 9.

At a news conference after the ceremony, however, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe reiterated that his government has no intention to sign the treaty, which legally bans nuclear weapons.

In the ceremony held at the Peace Park, participants observed one minute of silence in prayer for the victims at 11:02 a.m., when the atomic bomb detonated over the city.

In the city's Peace Declaration that followed, Mayor Tomihisa Taue said, "I would like to call this treaty, which mentions the suffering and struggles of the hibakusha, "The Hiroshima-Nagasaki Treaty."

The mayor, who devoted more than half of the Peace Declaration to the treaty, expressed gratitude to the "vigorous determination and courage" of the countries that promoted the treaty, the United Nations, nongovernmental organizations and others.

The anniversary ceremony was the first since the treaty was adopted at the United Nations in July.

Taue emphasized: "This is not our final goal. ... The human race is now faced with the question of how this long-awaited treaty can be utilized to make further progress."

He asked nuclear powers and countries dependent on their "nuclear umbrellas" to change their security policies relying on nuclear weapons and comply with the articles for nuclear disarmament that are specified in the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

Taue strongly criticized the Japanese government for its stance of not even taking part in the negotiations for the nuclear weapons prohibition treaty despite its pledge to "play a role as a bridge" between nuclear-weapon states and non-nuclear-weapon states.

"The stance is quite incomprehensible to those of us living in the cities that suffered atomic bombings," he said. He urged the Japanese government to join the treaty "at the earliest possible opportunity."

Taue asked the Japanese government "to affirm to the world its commitment to the pacifist ethos of the Constitution of Japan, which firmly renounces war, and its strict observance of the Three Non-Nuclear Principles."

The Japanese government is unwilling to join the pact on the grounds that it will further deepen confrontation between nuclear-weapon states and non-nuclear-weapon states, and therefore does not match Japan's stance of placing importance on cooperation between them.

In his speech at the ceremony, Abe said, "The participation of both nuclear-weapon states and non-nuclear-weapon states is necessary to realize 'a world free from nuclear weapons.'

"Our country will lead the international community by sticking with the Three Non-Nuclear Principles and lobbying both sides," he said. However, Abe did not refer to any concrete measures.

At the news conference later in Nagasaki, Abe said, "None of the nuclear-weapon states is participating in the treaty. We should not deepen the gap between nuclear-weapon states and non-nuclear-weapon states and make it more difficult to realize 'a world free from nuclear weapons.'"

The ceremony was attended by Izumi Nakamitsu, the U.N. undersecretary-general of disarmament affairs, the top position in the U.N. disarmament division, and ambassadors or other government representatives from 58 countries, including six nuclear nations.

India and Pakistan, both of which had sent representatives to the ceremony until last year, did not do so this year.

The United States sent an interim acting ambassador. It was feared that U.S. nuclear policy on disarmament would suffer a setback under President Donald Trump, whose predecessor, Barack Obama, had called for the realization of "a nuclear-free world."

During the past year, 3,551 people were confirmed to have died due to exposure to radiation from the atomic bombing on Nagasaki. Their names were added to the lists of the deceased, increasing the total to 175,743.

Nagasaki demands Japan join nuke ban treaty on A-bomb anniversary

<https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20170809/p2g/00m/0dm/006000c>

NAGASAKI (Kyodo) -- Nagasaki Mayor Tomihisa Taue demanded Wednesday that the Japanese government join a recently adopted treaty banning nuclear weapons, as the city marked the 72nd anniversary of the U.S. atomic bombing.

- **【Related】** Full text of Nagasaki Peace Declaration on 72nd A-bomb anniversary
- **【Related】** Gist of PM Abe's speech in Nagasaki on 72nd A-bomb anniversary
- **【Related】** Text of UN chief's message to Nagasaki ceremony on A-bomb anniv.

Taue's call for Japan's inclusion in the treaty adopted by 122 United Nations members last month followed an appeal last Sunday by the mayor of Hiroshima, Japan's other atomic-bombed city, to "bridge the gap" between nuclear and non-nuclear states to help realize a ban on nuclear weapons.

In Nagasaki's annual Peace Declaration at its memorial ceremony, Taue called the government's stance "incomprehensible" while pleading for Japan to join the treaty along with nuclear weapon states as well as other countries under the U.S. nuclear umbrella.

"(The Japanese government's) stance of not even participating in the diplomatic negotiations for the Nuclear Prohibition Treaty is quite incomprehensible to those of us living in the cities that suffered atomic bombings," Taue said at the city's Peace Park.

"As the only country in the world to have suffered wartime atomic bombings, I urge the Japanese government to reconsider the policy of relying on the nuclear umbrella and join the Nuclear Prohibition Treaty at the earliest possible opportunity," he said.

Taue also called on the government to "affirm to the world its commitment to the pacifist ethos of the Constitution of Japan, which firmly renounces war," at a time when Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's Liberal Democratic Party is seeking to formally propose an amendment to the foundational document.

For his part, Abe avoided any explicit mention of the treaty in his speech at the ceremony as he did in Hiroshima, but stressed that both nuclear weapon states and non-nuclear weapon states need to be on board if efforts toward nuclear abolition are to succeed.

"Japan is determined to lead the international community...by continuing to appeal to both sides," the prime minister said.

At a press conference held later Wednesday after Abe met representatives of local hibakusha groups, the prime minister said Japan is already "bridging the gap" between the nuclear and non-nuclear states, citing Japan's work to promote an arms reduction and non-proliferation initiative with other countries.

Representatives of 58 nations and the European Union attended the ceremony, including all five recognized nuclear powers -- Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States -- as well as undeclared nuclear weapon state Israel.

Izumi Nakamitsu, U.N. undersecretary general and high representative for disarmament affairs, read out a message to the people of Nagasaki on behalf of U.N. Secretary General Antonio Guterres, in which the U.N. chief noted "growing differences among countries about how to achieve the abolition of nuclear weapons."

"I hope that the adoption in July of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons will give renewed momentum to achieve our shared goal," the message said.

In Hiroshima's ceremony on Sunday to commemorate its own atomic bombing, Mayor Kazumi Matsui stopped short of demanding that Japan join the treaty, but urged the government to do "everything in its power to bridge the gap between the nuclear weapon and non-nuclear weapon states, thereby facilitating the ratification."

A plutonium-core atomic bomb named "Fat Man" dropped by a U.S. bomber exploded over Nagasaki at 11:02 a.m. on Aug. 9, 1945, at an altitude of around 500 meters, three days after the United States dropped the first atomic bomb on Hiroshima.

An estimated 74,000 people died from the bombing in Nagasaki by the end of that year. In Hiroshima, a projected 140,000 were killed by the end of the year.

Japan surrendered six days after the bombing of Nagasaki, prompting the end of World War II.

The combined number of "hibakusha," people who survived either bombing, stood at 164,621 as of March. Their average age was 81.41.

People from around Japan and overseas climbed the gentle slopes leading to the park from early morning, at one point braving a blustery downpour that passed before the ceremony started.

Sayaka Akagi, 30, came to the park in memory of her late grandfather, who survived the bombing.

"I'm a school teacher in Nagasaki, and every year I make a lesson for the children based on the mayor's peace declaration and get them to think about it," Akagi said.

Filip Deheegher, who works for the city of Ypres in Belgium, came to the park having been deeply moved by exhibits at the Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum earlier in the week.

Noting that his hometown was the site of a series of devastating battles in World War I, he remarked, "What took a few months to destroy in my town took two seconds in Nagasaki."

Shortly after dawn, members of a high school student peace ambassador program that began in Nagasaki 20 years ago gathered around a monument near the park at the hypocenter of the bombing.

The 22 student ambassadors, along with dozens of other students who have collected signatures from around Japan in support of nuclear abolition, formed a circle around the monument.

Nagasaki student ambassador Daiki Mizokami, 17, whose grandparents lived through the bombing, spoke of the importance of listening to the stories of hibakusha and hailed the adoption of the ban treaty.

"The next big step is to reduce the nuclear weapons that still exist now," he said.

Two NHK videos on nuclear arms

August 9, 2017

NHK videos

Interview with UN Disarmament Chief

<https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/videos/20170809185837019/>

To Attain a World Free of Nuclear Arms

<https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/videos/20170809181657742/>

Hibakusha angry at Japan's hypocrisy

Japan's reluctance to adopt nuclear ban treaty angers hibakusha as Nagasaki marks A-bomb anniversary

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2017/08/09/national/japans-reluctance-adopt-nuclear-ban-treaty-angers-hibakusha-nagasaki-marks-bomb-anniversary/#.WY2NNsZpyic>

by Sophie Jackman

Kyodo

NAGASAKI – As Hiroshima and Nagasaki marked the 72nd anniversary of the U.S. atomic bombings, aging survivors deplored what they called the hypocrisy by the Japanese government following its decision to stay out of a treaty banning nuclear arms.

Despite anger and calls from the survivors urging Japan to join the historic treaty, a world free of nuclear weapons remains elusive as the atomic-bombed nation sticks to a “realistic approach” advocated by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe.

The prospect of survivors’s wishes being fulfilled had looked brighter when Barack Obama became the first sitting U.S. president to visit Hiroshima in May last year, when he espoused “a world without nuclear weapons.”

Last month, just over a year after his visit, the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons was adopted by 122 members of the United Nations. The accord acknowledges the “unacceptable suffering” of the hibakusha — survivors of the bombings on Aug. 6 and 9, 1945, that killed an estimated 214,000 people by the end of that year.

But Japan and others under the U.S. nuclear umbrella refused to take part in negotiations, as did the world’s nuclear-armed states.

Defending Japan’s stance, Abe said at a news conference in Hiroshima that joining the treaty could “result in the distance between nuclear weapons and non-nuclear weapons states being further widened.”

His remark angered 78-year-old Hiroshima hibakusha Hiroshi Harada, former head of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum.

“Of course the hibakusha are angry, but we’re getting old and those of us who can really speak out are getting fewer and fewer,” Harada said.

The survivors’ average age was 81.41 as of March.

“If the Japanese government isn’t going to do anything, I don’t want (Abe) to keep describing Japan in his speeches as ‘the only country to have sustained atomic bombings in wartime,’ ” Harada said. “If you’re going to tout that fact, you need to follow it up with the appropriate action.”

Hiroshima peace activist Haruko Moritaki, 78, said it was “embarrassing” how Japan’s envoy turned up on the first day of treaty negotiations at the U.N. headquarters in New York in March, only to say the country would not be taking part.

“Japan has shamed itself on the international stage ... unless we change our policy, we are in no position to try to persuade other countries to abolish nuclear weapons,” she said.

In addition to Japan’s reluctant stance, Obama’s successor Donald Trump has called for the United States to bolster its nuclear arsenal, staking a position at odds with decades of efforts to scale back the nation’s atomic weaponry.

Peter Kuznick, professor of history and director of the Nuclear Studies Institute at American University, said developments since Obama’s visit have shown the futility of expecting the U.S. administration to move closer to a world without nuclear weapons.

Speaking in Hiroshima, Kuznick said that while Obama subsequently abandoned consideration of a “no first use” policy that would have made the world safer, and authorized a \$1 trillion program to modernize the U.S. nuclear arsenal, his successor is “impulsive.”

Before his election last year, Trump had also suggested that Japan and South Korea could acquire nuclear weapons in the future, and U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson refused to rule this out in a March interview with U.S. media, according to U.S. reports.

In such an environment, the Abe government has apparently made a judgment that it cannot join the treaty without compromising its heavily U.S.-dependent national security, particularly in light of North Korea's development of nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles.

"Having seen the transition from Obama to Trump, I've found it basically doesn't matter who's in charge," peace activist Moritaki said. "It's both our duty and our right to stand up for peace on our own."

But despite the difficult environment facing Japan, Akira Kawasaki, an executive committee member of Tokyo-based nongovernmental organization Peace Boat, said joining the treaty would put Japan in a better position to persuade Pyongyang to disarm.

"Many people do not fully understand the historic importance of this treaty ... it provides a pathway for ex-nuclear weapon states to dismantle their arsenals, and as of the present there's no other international treaty that does that," Kawasaki said.

Kawasaki suggests that if Japan cannot join now, it should set a policy goal to join the treaty with one condition: That both North and South Korea must also join at the same time.

"Having North Korea join the treaty will benefit Japan and South Korea in a security sense, while those two countries will have to commit to not stationing U.S. nuclear weapons on their soil, thus reassuring North Korea and encouraging it to disarm," he said.

Although such a move might be mere symbolism without a change of leadership in North Korea, it is something the Abe government can do for now to regain some integrity as the guardian of the only country to have sustained wartime atomic bombings, Kawasaki said.

Some sort of commitment — that is what 83-year-old Sachiko Matsuo called for in Nagasaki, where at age 11 she lived through the atomic bombing that killed nearly half her family.

"We hibakusha have taken our time to get to this point, so we understand that not everything can be done quickly," she said. "But [Japan] mustn't give up. What we need is a first step."

Passing down the bomb experience

August 9, 2017

Passing Down the Atomic Bomb Experience

<https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/editors/3/passingdowntheabombexperience/>

On August 9th 1945, the second atomic bombing in history took place just 3 days after the one in Hiroshima. Nagasaki was instantly destroyed by the blast. In that year alone, more than 70,000 people lost their lives.

On the 72nd anniversary of the bombing, thousands of people gathered in Nagasaki's Peace Park, close to where the bomb hit, to attend a ceremony. They observed a moment of silence at 11:02 AM -- the exact time the bomb was dropped.

Among those in attendance were atomic bomb survivors, known as hibakusha.

Representatives from more than 50 countries, including some nuclear powers, also took part.

Nagasaki's Mayor, Tomihisa Taue, delivered a peace declaration. He spoke of a global treaty to ban nuclear weapons adopted last month at the UN headquarters by 122 countries and territories. It followed decades of slow progress. Nuclear powers did not participate in the negotiations. Neither did countries that depend on nuclear power for protection, including Japan.

"Please reconsider your policies that seek to protect your countries with nuclear weapons. The existing Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty obligates all member states to disarm. Please fulfill this obligation. The whole world is waiting for your brave decisions," said Taue.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe did not address the treaty. He said Japan needs to continue to share the memory of its tragic experiences across generations and borders.

"To truly achieve a world without nuclear weapons, it is essential for countries that have nuclear weapons and those who do not to work together. Japan abides by its 3 principles of not possessing, producing or allowing nuclear weapons on its land. And it is determined to lead the world by closely working with both sides with this goal in mind," he said.

A survivors' representative criticized Japan's reliance on nuclear energy, especially in light of the Fukushima nuclear meltdowns in 2011. Yoshitoshi Fukahori was 16 years old when his sister was killed by the Nagasaki bomb.

"Nuclear power plants are being put in operation again one after another. No matter what kind of strict regulations are put into place, they're useless against earthquakes," he said.

Each year, names of victims are placed in a stone vault. They include survivors who died within the past year and newly confirmed victims. This year, 3,551 names were added, totaling more than 175,000.

What are some of the issues people in Nagasaki still face, more than 70 years after the atomic bombing? The refrain you hear the most is, "Pass on the experience to the next generation." Most of the atomic bomb survivors are now more than 80 years old. So who will tell their stories in the future?

Newsroom Tokyo anchor Hideki Nakayama walked the streets of the city in search of an answer.

72 years ago, central Nagasaki was just a stretch of burnt ruins. But it's difficult to find traces of that today. I went to the opening of a photo exhibition. It's about the grandchildren of atomic bomb survivors from Nagasaki and Hiroshima and their families.

One photo shows a survivor with her son and granddaughter. Accompanying the photo is a memo of the person's experience of the atomic bombing. It was passed on to the granddaughter.

The photographer, Hiroko Doune, took pictures of more than 50 families of grandchildren of survivors.

"Many times, I had to cancel sessions because the survivors had died. There is little time left, but there are still families able to talk about the experience. I just hope I'm able to create opportunities for them to talk with each other," she says.

The loss of people's memories is not the only issue at stake.

In the city is a shrine gate. Half of it was blown away by the atomic bomb, and the other remains standing. It shows the immense power of the atomic bomb.

Last October, 5 sites in the city, including this shrine gate, were designated as national historic sites related to the 1945 atomic bombing.

A former belfry was among them. It used to stand at the top of Urakami Cathedral, which collapsed in the blast. Nagasaki City officials say they need to provide in-depth information to help visitors grasp the importance of these sites.

"We're considering changing some visual images in the presentation, or adding digital information to make it more comprehensible. Perhaps we should use the internet. We believe it's important to spread the word about the meaning of these sites," says the Manager of Nagasaki City's A-Bomb Heritage Section, Takashi Matsuo.

Young people are coming forward with suggestions on how to make good use of the historic sites.

"I think it would be better to put up signs along the visitor route. An information board in front of the museum is also needed," says a Nagasaki University student.

An elementary school stands about 500 meters from ground zero. 138 people were killed in the bombing.

Nagasaki University students are hoping to use their expertise in structural engineering to help with the presentation problem.

The 1st and 2nd floors of the school building are open to the public. Photos and remnants of the bombing are on display.

The students focused their attention on the 3rd floor, which is kept closed for preservation and safety. We obtained special permission to enter.

"These show how violent the fire caused by the atomic bomb's heat ray was. It scorched wooden blocks laid inside concrete," says one of the students.

They're thinking of attaching stairs outside the building and letting visitors look inside the no-entry space through a window. They also hit upon the idea to extend the stairs to the rooftop. Ground zero is visible from the roof.

"We can imagine what the town looked like right after the bombing. I think that's the great benefit of this place," says a student.

"I think people of younger generations, like us, should actively work to learn about atomic bomb materials and sites and get involved in efforts to preserve them in as good a condition as possible," he continues.

Matsuo says, "Young people know better than us how to hand down the knowledge to future generations. Their ideas are really very helpful."

Nagasaki City officials are hearing people's opinions. They say they will decide on the best way to preserve and use of these sites by 2019.

There was a big push for nuclear disarmament last month. That's when the United Nations adopted the first-ever global treaty to legally ban nuclear weapons.

The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons disallows the development, possession and use of such arms. It even forbids threatening to use nuclear arms, and clearly opposes using nuclear deterrents.

Newsroom Tokyo anchor Hideki Nakayama is joined by Keiko Nakamura, who was at the UN headquarters as a researcher during negotiations on the treaty. She is also an associate professor at Nagasaki University's Research Center for Nuclear Weapons Abolition.

Nakayama: The adoption of the treaty is indeed an epoch-making development. What's its significance?

Nakamura: It is very significant that the treaty makes nuclear weapons illegal under international law. The prohibition is the first step to establish a world free of nuclear weapons. The treaty will bolster international norms against nuclear weapons, which will pressure both nuclear weapon states and their allies.

Nakayama: In the treaty, the term hibakusha is used twice in the introduction. It's the Japanese word for the victims of the use of nuclear weapons. The adoption of the treaty has been a long-held dream of hibakusha in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. We have a report.

In 1982, a survivor from Nagasaki called on the UN to enact an agreement that would classify the use of nuclear weapons as a crime against humanity.

"No more Hiroshima, no more Nagasaki, no more war, no more hibakusha!" said Senji Yamaguchi.

His appeal came as little progress had been made in nuclear disarmament.

From the 1960s, disarmament efforts were being made based mainly on the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. The United States and the former Soviet Union played a central role in concluding the treaty during the Cold War era.

But the agreement failed in getting any nuclear powers to give up their weapons. In fact, the number of nuclear-armed countries continued to rise.

People in Nagasaki persisted in calling for a total ban on nuclear weapons.

Many non-nuclear states also began to think that a new framework was needed. In 2013, Australia, Mexico and other countries started full-fledged talks on banning nuclear arms by focusing on the inhumanity of these weapons.

Hibakusha gave first-hand accounts about the cruelty they experienced by such arms.

"The atomic bombs are gene-targeting weapons of which radiation immediately causes DNA damage that eventually induces leukemia and cancers during the entire life of hibakusha.

Nuclear weapons are kind of pandemic disease from doctor's eye. The only effective treatment for this disease is abolishing these weapons," said one atomic bomb survivor.

In March, talks on a legally-binding nuclear weapons ban treaty got underway at the UN. But no nuclear-armed countries took part.

The Japanese government remained opposed to the talks and did not participate. This disappointed many hibakusha.

"The talks are not only unrealistic in helping to create a world without nuclear weapons. They could further deepen the rift between nuclear and non-nuclear countries," said Fumio Kishida, the Japanese foreign minister at the time.

Costa Rican Ambassador Elayne Whyte Gomez, who chaired the talks, visited Nagasaki to meet with hibakusha.

"It is very important for me as a chair of this conference that I was able to come to Nagasaki and experience and see with my own senses the impact of atomic explosions," she said.

The treaty was finally adopted in July with overwhelming support from non-nuclear countries.

In Nagasaki, a bell was rung to mark the treaty's adoption and to pay tribute to hibakusha.

"As a survivor, I believe the treaty marks a step or 2 forward. But I'm very sad because Japan's government isn't taking part," said a hibakusha.

Nakayama: Nuclear deterrence used to be an essential factor in the debate on nuclear disarmament. But now discussions are focusing on the inhumanity of nuclear weapons. That represents a major shift. Would you say that nuclear arms' role as nuclear deterrence used to be recognized and accepted, but that those weapons are now regarded as evil?

Nakamura: Since 2010, the humanitarian approach has been growing and shifted the discussions about nuclear weapons from security policies towards discussing nuclear weapons in terms of their effects on humanity. The humanitarian approach transformed the discussions from a small group of states to a global discussion amongst the public.

Nakayama: But, in reality, North Korea is believed to be stepping up its nuclear development program. What do you think about the opinion that dismisses the treaty as having no effect?

Nakamura: The DPRK's behavior is a direct result of the US' extended deterrence policy. The DPRK nuclear situation is urgent, and it is absolutely necessary that we alleviate the situation. As the situation worsens, I am increasingly concerned about the high alert status of the US nuclear weapons, which can be launched even within a minute. There is a high risk that they could be accidentally launched, which would cause severe problems.

Nakayama: Japan isn't joining the treaty. It's faced with a big dilemma -- placing itself under the nuclear umbrella, despite being the only country ever to have suffered atomic bombings. What kind of a request would you send to the Japanese government?

Nakamura: As the only state which experienced the devastating impact of nuclear weapons during war times, Japan has a moral responsibility to support the ban treaty. As an ally to the US, Japan could stand up and pressure the US to change its policies. Currently, Japan strongly supports the US extended deterrence policy. It believes that nuclear weapons will preserve the country and resolve the situation with the DPRK.

This idea is wrong and Japan must support a diplomatic solution and support the establishment of a Northeast Asia Nuclear Weapons Free Zone.

Nakayama: The treaty refers to hibakusha and the 2 devastated cities Nagasaki and Hiroshima are gaining greater importance. What sort of message can Nagasaki send to the world now?

Nakamura: Although we have the ban treaty, we still raise public awareness about the dangers and effects of nuclear weapons on humanity. August 6 and August 9 are not only days to reflect about the past, but days in which we must think about the future. Hence, disarmament education is vital and can help us to avoid another nuclear war. I strongly believe that young people can play a vital role and can expand upon the actions of the hibakusha. They can create innovative projects to raise awareness about the dangers of nuclear weapons.

Will Nagasaki be the last place destroyed by an atomic bomb? It is the hibakushas' long-held dream that such a treaty becomes a reality.

The treaty declares the atomic bombs caused catastrophic humanitarian consequences. But it's also a cruel reality that the threat of nuclear weapons still exists.

None of the states that possess them have recognized the treaty. After 72 years, we have more nations that can trigger a catastrophe.

That's why it is even more important to hear the messages of the hibakusha and see the remnants of the bombings. They don't just teach us about the past, but warn everyone what could lie ahead if nuclear weapons continue to exist.

There is a glimmer of hope that this important message is being passed on to younger generations. They are the ones who will continue to speak out that it is inhumane to use or even possess nuclear weapons.

Highschool students launch petition

August 12, 2017

High school anti-nuclear petition hits record

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20170811_21/

A record number of high school students across Japan have signed a petition addressed to the United Nations calling for the abolition of nuclear weapons.

High school students in the atomic-bombed city of Nagasaki and elsewhere have been collecting such signatures annually since 2001. The campaign was in response to the 1998 nuclear tests carried out by India and Pakistan.

Students met in Nagasaki on Friday to compile the signatures collected over the past year.

The total came to 214,300, up nearly 90,000 from last year. According to the campaign website, the number includes 8,418 signatures collected in South Korea, Switzerland, New Zealand and the Philippines.

The students handed the signatures to 3 high school peace ambassadors from Nagasaki Prefecture.

One of the ambassadors, Rina Tomita, says she was surprised by the number.

She says it is not easy to ask people to sign a petition, and the record number of signatures is the fruit of hard work by the students.

Another ambassador, Daiki Mizokami, says they will deliver the signatures to the UN and make an appeal to the world for the abolition of nuclear weapons.

The 3 students will join peace ambassadors chosen from elsewhere in Japan and deliver the signatures to the secretariat of the Conference on Disarmament at the UN headquarters in Geneva on August 22nd.

History lessons should be heeded

August 15, 2017

EDITORIAL: Lessons learned from history still relevant 72 years after war's end

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201708150029.html>

What color was the world at the time of World War II?

Some young Japanese say they have the impression that the entire world was colorless at that time, with everything in black and white.

That's because, they say, they have only seen monochrome photographs and videos showing scenes of the war, such as air raids and battlefields.

"I thought wartime Japan was a completely different world from our society today," said Non, a 24-year-old Japanese actress who voiced the heroine of the 2016 Japanese animated film "Kono Sekai no Katasumi-ni" (In This Corner of the World), which depicts Japanese people's lives during wartime.

The anniversary of the end of the war, Aug. 15, has rolled around again.

Many members of the younger generation seem to feel uncomfortable when they hear older Japanese talk about such topics as pledges to renounce war or passing on the nation's war experiences to future generations.

"Times are different now," they often say.

Indeed, history doesn't exactly repeat itself. Forms of warfare change with the times.

But there are common social factors underlying all kinds of war. Here lie the lessons of history.

WARTIME ECONOMIC BOOM

In August 1937, one month after the start of the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945), Kafu Nagai, a Japanese writer, wrote his observations of life in Tokyo in his diary.

"As I see the lives of residents in Tokyo these days, they appear to be feeling considerable satisfaction and happiness without feeling any anxiety about the militarist politics, feeling no fear for the war. They rather seem to be delighted at the situation," he wrote.

Japan posted a torrid economic growth of 23 percent that year, thanks to thriving military industries. The nation was in boom times.

Two years later, when Japan's war with China had bogged down with the front expanded deep into the interior of China, Tokyo's Ginza prime shopping district remained vibrant.

There were long lines of people in front of movie theaters. Fashion-conscious women enjoyed wearing short skirts. Trendy colors were crimson like the color of the flower of peony and soft bluish green, the color of bamboo. During the night, neon-lit streets in Ginza were thronged by tipsy corporate employees.

The war was only being fought overseas, far from Japan. Japanese living in cities those days were feeling as if the war had nothing to do with them, according to records of the times.

"Where is the war going on, anyway?" they asked nonchalantly.

It was too late when people realized that the war was on their doorstep.

"I found / The war / Standing in the depth / Of the corridor"

This is a short poem composed in that year by Hakusen Watanabe, an up-and-coming haiku poet at that time.

In the following year, he was arrested on suspicion of violating the public security preservation law because of his artistic activities.

As Watanabe observed accurately, the times were radically changing, with things that were normal mixed with those that were not.

SEEING TODAY'S JAPAN FROM HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The first notable trend that emerged as Japanese society came under the oppressive rule of the wartime militarist government, and that never reversed itself, was the rejection of diversity.

In Japan's colonies, including Korea and Taiwan, as well as in Okinawa, the government carried out education programs aimed at integrating the areas into Japanese systems. In Japan's mainland, academic freedom and freedom of speech were rapidly restricted through various developments including a harsh crackdown on the academic theory that the emperor was an organ of the state.

There were people who were not aware that they enjoyed their lives at the expense of these values and those who knew that but didn't stand up for the values.

Later generations know what fate befell Japan in the following years.

It is easy to find and talk about past turning points from the perspective of history.

Let us imagine how future generations of Japanese will assess the current situation of this country.

Writer Kazutoshi Hando argues that since the start of its modernization, Japan has been undergoing a 40-year rise-and-fall cycle.

He says Japan has experienced 40-year periods of ups and downs alternately--the period of rise between the end of the Tokugawa Shogunate until the war with Russia, the subsequent period of decline that ended with Japan's defeat in the war and the following period of economic expansion that ended with the bursting of the so-called bubble economy. Now, Japan is again in a period of decline, according to the writer.

"People forget what happened after 40 years or so," Hando says. "There were few Japanese leaders during the periods of the Sino-Japanese War and the Pacific War who had a clear understanding of the misery of the Russo-Japanese War. The same is true with Japanese politicians today."

VOICES WARNING ABOUT THE MOOD OF TODAY'S JAPAN

Like many other scholars and researchers, Hando doesn't like to casually say, "History repeats itself."

That's because he knows the complexity of history, which is made of countless small facts and coincidences as well as backgrounds behind them all.

Even so, a growing number of people well-versed in Japanese history have been warning in recent years that there are certain similarities between Japanese society today and that in the prewar period.

The new national security legislation and the "anti-conspiracy" law are often cited as symbols of the dangerous atmosphere. But they are not the only reasons to worry.

There are also some deeper trends that raise concerns, such as an excessive focus on the country's own interests, disparaging comments about other countries and races, the notion that public order should be placed before the rights of individuals and intolerance toward criticism of the government's ideas about national interests and values.

Hando warns that people's ideas and spirits that make history don't change much over time. There are, of course, certain factors that set today's Japan apart from its past self. We have established and cherished a Constitution that guarantees the freedom of expression, thought and academic pursuit. We don't have the military power to wage a war. More than anything, we, the people with whom resides sovereign power, have the power to choose our own government. We need to be aware of the fact that we are living in a society whose history has continued from the Japan that suffered catastrophe 72 years ago. To prevent another national catastrophe, we need to monitor closely what is happening right now and try to stop dangerous movements, if any, by speaking clearly against them. This is, we believe, the responsibility that citizens and the news media of today should fulfill for the future of this nation. The sky above Japan on Aug. 15, 1945, was not monochrome. The nation was under a bright blue summer sky.
--The Asahi Shimbun, Aug. 15

North Korea: What's the plan?

August 15, 2017

What Kim Jong Un hopes to gain from nuclear game plan

by Peter Apps

Reuters

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2017/08/15/asia-pacific/kim-jong-uns-hopes-gain-nuclear-game-plan/#.WZK3psZpyos>

On October 3, 1942 — 75 years ago this year — a prototype German V-2 rocket launched from the German military firing range at Peenemunde in the Baltic reached an altitude of 84.5 km (52.5 miles). It was, by some definitions, the first human-built object in space.

It was the height of World War Two, and with the entry of the United States into the conflict the tide was already turning against Adolf Hitler and the Nazis. They knew, however, that if they could perfect both the world's first ballistic missiles and win the race to an atomic bomb, they would become virtually unassailable.

Had Germany gotten the bomb first, the Allies most likely would have had to sue for peace rather than risk the Hiroshima and Nagasaki-like destruction of many Western cities.

Luckily for the rest of the world, it was a capability Hitler never achieved. But it's a lesson that North Korea's Kim Jong Un appears to have taken to heart.

With two tests of his latest Hwasong-12 ballistic missile on July 4 and 28, he looks to be on the precipice of achieving what only a handful of America's enemies have dreamed — the ability to hit the U.S. mainland with nuclear force.

It's a strategic sea change that has been a long time coming — and which many in the U.S. defense establishment have long expected. It's doubtful either North Korean or U.S. officials genuinely know how accurate North Korea's current rockets would be at intercontinental range. It's one thing to be able to fire a rocket a third of the way around the planet. It's another to know with certainty that it will hit a city, or that the warhead within it will actually explode.

As Pyongyang's test program moves forward — there seems little prospect of it pulling back — the answers to those questions will emerge. Already, the U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency is reported to be

operating under the assumption North Korea has now perfected a small-enough warhead to fit on a rocket.

Kim's progress on rockets is even clearer. Analysis by the London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies of video footage of the latest two launches suggests Pyongyang now has a working rocket motor based on Soviet rocket engines not used by Russia since the 1990s.

It's uncertain how Pyongyang acquired such technology so much quicker than expected. IISS suggests the most likely origins are poorly-guarded military stockpiles or illicit networks in Russia and Ukraine. The important point, however, is that this is not especially sophisticated technology. If the North Koreans don't have it working yet, they — and the former Soviet scientists suspected to be helping them — will fix it before long.

Russia, of course, has had the ability to inflict massive damage on the U.S. mainland since at least the 1950s. Both Washington and Russia swarmed all over Germany's research sites after the war, taking that technology- and the experts behind it, and refining it still further. China too has been able to strike the U.S. since the 1960s.

Each of those redefined Washington's diplomatic and military options. Broadly, however, both Moscow and Beijing have been seen largely as responsible fellow superpowers. For all the fears and paranoia of the Cold War era, there was often a general feeling that the fear of "mutually assured destruction" could keep things under control.

That is seen as less certain with Kim. It's not that the young North Korean leader is expected to lash out randomly with some kind of unilateral, unexpected strike; he knows that would result in his own regime's destruction. The entire point of his nuclear program has always been to safeguard his rule, not bring it to a cataclysmic early conclusion.

The problem, though, will come if the wheels start to come off the rule of the current North Korean leadership. There's no particular reason to believe it is on the verge of imminent collapse, but pressures on it will continue to rise.

Kim's hope seems to be that the more potent his nuclear capabilities, the more the rest of the world feels it has no choice but to allow him to stay in position. The opposite, however, may happen. This month's unanimous United Nations Security Council resolution sparked by the successful missile tests will notably increase economic strains on North Korea. China is frustrated, and is tightening the screws on Pyongyang with a ban on importing certain North Korean products such as coal and iron.

Within the U.S., meanwhile, there are growing calls for Washington to step up its attempts to aggressively destabilize North Korea, supporting some indigenous South Korean-based efforts to undermine Kim's rule.

The problem is that any revolution — whether outside inspired or not — or alternative end to the Kim regime is made more dangerous by the rising nuclear threat. Earlier this year, I chaired a panel that included former senior U.S. officials examining what might happen if the North Korean regime collapsed. Their conclusion was stark: if Kim felt he was about to be ousted or killed, he would almost certainly launch. Likely targets would be Japan and, if he could reach it, the U.S. mainland.

U.S.-operated antiballistic missile batteries based in Japan and South Korea are supposed to provide a last-ditch defense against this kind of risk. However, such technology remains in its early stages. Shooting down a fast-falling ballistic missile remains difficult if not impossible. Shooting down several is harder still.

All this helps explain this last round of speculation over a potentially imminent strike, intensified by U.S. President Donald Trump's talk of "fire and fury" and military options being "locked and loaded." For many

in the U.S. national security establishment, there is a real feeling that this may be the last moment such an option is tenable. Others believe it is already too late.

The dangers of a conventional war on the Korean peninsula, particularly North Korean conventional artillery strikes on the South Korean capital of Seoul, were enough to deter Presidents Bill Clinton, George W. Bush and Barack Obama from taking military action against Pyongyang. North Korea's latest missile tests arguably put even further pressure on Trump to make the same calculus.

Which way this idiosyncratic, unpredictable president will jump, even he may not yet know. His advice from his national security team may well be deeply conflicting. Should he strike, some will unquestionably accuse him of simply trying to distract from domestic political woes.

If disaster does come, the U.S. may well regret acting — or not having acted sooner. In reality, though, it may always have been inevitable America would face a situation like this. Indeed, perhaps the surprise should be that it has taken this long.

August 17, 2017

Moon: North's ICBM nuclearization will be red line

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20170817_24/

South Korea's President Moon Jae-in has said that North Korea would be "crossing a red line" if it put a nuclear warhead on an intercontinental ballistic missile.

Moon made the comment at a news conference on Thursday marking his first 100 days in office.

He said he believes North Korea would be crossing a red line if it completes its development of ICBMs and mounts nuclear warheads on its ballistic missiles. He said he believes North Korea is nearing that line.

Moon went on to say that he is confident a war will never again break out on the Korean Peninsula. He said no one can decide to take any military action on the peninsula without obtaining South Korea's approval first, even the United States.

Moon added that should North Korea again make a provocation, it will face further enhanced sanctions, but the problem will ultimately have to be solved peacefully.

He said US President Donald Trump agrees with this stance, and it is an international consensus.

China and the North Korean challenge



August 17, 2017

China and the North Korean nuclear challenge

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2017/08/17/commentary/world-commentary/china-north-korean-nuclear-challenge/#.WZV-q8Zpyot>

In Beijing's eyes, the status quo is preferable to the upheaval that would result from action to topple Kim

by Ramesh Thakur

Guangzhou, CHINA – On a superficial reading, China is feeling the squeeze to take effective action to bring North Korea to heel over its rogue nuclear program. On a deeper reading, China's gains from the crisis exceed the costs. On a wider reading, Washington daily vindicates Pyongyang's nuclear choices. In July, Pyongyang demonstrated technical capability to launch intercontinental ballistic missiles that put U.S. mainland cities within reach. The trigger to the latest tit-for-tat brinkmanship is revised U.S. intelligence assessments that North Korea has miniaturized warheads to fit them on the missiles, and may already possess 60 bombs.

China is at a critical inflection point in its upwardly mobile trajectory. Its long-term strategic vision and political stability have underpinned sustained economic growth and dramatic expansion of comprehensive national power. This has substantially bolstered its voice and role in regional and global governance. Permanent membership of the U.N. Security Council adds to its structural weight in managing world affairs.

But China is still only a middle income country. At \$8,000, its GDP per capita is only one-seventh that of the United States and ranks it 72nd in the world. Its dramatic growth and massive population are projected forward and the prospective power potential conditions the expectations of China as a global leader today. But at present China lacks the material capacity to meet such elevated expectations. Stability and conflict-avoidance in its immediate region remains a vital national interest for China's development and peaceful rise. Heightened tensions over North Korea's nuclear antics risk an uncontrolled armed conflict, strengthened U.S.-Japan-South Korea alliances and enhanced prospects of nuclear breakouts by Japan, South Korea and Taiwan.

But China's leverage over Pyongyang, although greater than that of others, is limited.

Pyongyang has proven indifferent to what others think and impervious to external pressure.

With 80 percent of trade with China, more U.N. sanctions amount to more sanctions on China. It is cost-free for Washington and Western countries to engage in virtue signaling by enacting still tougher international sanctions whose costs have to be borne by China.

If the sanctions succeed in destroying North Korea's economy and engineer a collapse, millions of desperate refugees will flood into China and a crucial geographical buffer against U.S. forces will disappear.

By what right does Washington tolerate nuclear weapons in the hands of its ally Israel but demand that China force a rollback of North Korea's? In Beijing's eyes, the U.S. provokes a crisis but holds China responsible for solving it. U.S. threats also stir memories among elderly Chinese of how they were treated in the early years of China's own nuclear program.

Any further weakening of Pyongyang's links with Beijing and Moscow will feed North Korea leader Kim Jong Un's siege paranoia and solidify reliance on nuclear weapons as the only assured guarantee of regime and personal survival. The U.S. record of infidelity to political package deals — the 1954 Geneva accords on Indochina, understandings with Russia on Eastern Europe on ending the Cold War, Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi's abandonment of his nuclear program — inspires distrust. Every fresh bellicose threat from Washington deepens Pyongyang's dependence on and attachment to a nuclear deterrent that can strike the U.S. mainland.

On balance, therefore, in China's calculation the status quo of a nuclearized North Korea, however unpalatable, is preferable to the upheaval that would result from military strikes or regime collapse. This is consistent with the sober conclusion of *The Economist* that all options for dealing with North Korea are bad but blundering into a war would be the worst.

Nothing in North Korea's history indicates its leadership is suicidal. Conversely, Donald Trump's career to date does not inspire confidence in the quality of his decision-making. On nuclear policy he is positively terrifying in proving with each new tweet how ignorant, reckless and a threat to world peace he is. In a 37-country global survey of 40,448 people, 62 percent considered him dangerous and only 26 percent thought he is fit to be U.S. president.

The recent Trump-Kim exchange of inflammatory rhetoric highlighted both as blustering megalomaniacs who pose a clear and present danger to world peace. Kim may already have achieved one major goal of being treated as an equal by the U.S. On Aug. 15, South Korean President Moon Jae-in warned publicly that any action against the North would require his consent and he renewed calls for dialogue with the North. But the frightening reality is that Trump would not face any domestic checks on his untrammelled authority to use nuclear weapons. The existing protocol has been designed for speed and efficiency, not deliberation, and permits the president to launch nuclear weapons with a single verbal order.

By contrast, Chinese President Xi Jinping is the very model of a circumspect, calm and statesmanlike leader urging restraint in rhetoric and action by both sides and calling for a phased program (freeze-for-freeze) to reduce tensions. Each new step on the escalation ladder does further damage to the U.S. reputation for responsible leadership while boosting China's profile and prestige. It also obscures China's own past culpability in enabling North Korea's nuclear program while underlining the history of U.S. forcible regime change as the main driver of Pyongyang's nuclear pursuit.

This, in turn, amplifies the larger narrative of the diminishing U.S. presence in Asia, weakening its alliance system and sowing doubts about the reliability and quality of U.S. decision-making. Retaliatory trade measures against China would cause substantial damage to the U.S. economy and also to U.S. allies in global supply chains that run increasingly through China.

Japan and South Korea have managed to live for years with the reality of vulnerability to North Korea's nukes. There is no reason why the U.S. cannot learn to do the same. Kim should be left in no doubt that an

attack on any of the three allies would bring instant military strikes and elimination of the regime. But there will be no preventive strikes. Instead a policy of containment — which requires credible threats, not bluster — will be instituted along with risk avoidance and crisis stability measures that served all sides well during the Cold War.

The only genuine progress on eliminating nuclear threats will be a universal ban treaty followed by a verifiable and enforceable plan for destroying and dismantling nuclear weapons programs in all countries.

Professor Ramesh Thakur is director of the Center for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament in the Crawford School of Public Policy, Australian National University.

Change of heart at the White House?

August 17, 2017

Trump adviser Bannon open to withdrawing U.S. troops from South Korea if North freezes nuclear program

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2017/08/17/asia-pacific/politics-diplomacy-asia-pacific/trump-adviser-bannon-open-withdrawing-u-s-troops-south-korea-north-gives-nukes/#.WZV-HcZpyos>

by Jesse Johnson

Staff Writer

Top White House adviser Steve Bannon has said he would be open to a potential deal in which China persuaded North Korea to freeze its nuclear buildup in exchange for the removal of U.S. troops from the Korean Peninsula.

In an interview published Wednesday by the American Prospect, a left-leaning website, Bannon said “he might consider” such a deal “with verifiable inspections,” but noted that this kind of agreement “seemed remote.”

South Korea currently hosts 28,500 U.S. troops that act as both a deterrent to North Korean aggression and a tripwire in the event of war, a scenario that would see forces in Japan, Guam and elsewhere sent into battle. Pyongyang has long sought a peace treaty with Washington — to replace the 1953 armistice — that would see the American forces depart the peninsula.

In the interview, Bannon, who has reportedly seen his standing with President Donald Trump fade in recent weeks, also dismissed a military option for dealing with Pyongyang despite Trump’s incendiary remarks that he could unleash “fire and fury” if North Korea continued to threaten the U.S., its territories and its allies with missiles and nuclear weapons.

“There’s no military solution [to North Korea’s nuclear threats], forget it,” he was quoted as saying. “Until somebody solves the part of the equation that shows me that ten million people in Seoul don’t die in the first 30 minutes from conventional weapons, I don’t know what you’re talking about, there’s no military solution here, they got us.”

Van Jackson, an expert on North Korea at Victoria University of Wellington in New Zealand, suggested any deal involving the removal of U.S. troops from South Korea would do tremendous damage to the two countries’ alliance.

“Bannon seems to be saying (South) Korea doesn’t matter so even if we get something small and temporary it’s worth it because China and the war against Islam are all that matters,” Jackson said.

This is “crazy with a capital ‘C,’” he added.

Some analysts say the removal of American troops could kick-start negotiations on denuclearization, but scores of others say such a move would create a vacuum for more provocative actions by North Korea while also potentially laying the groundwork for an arms race in Northeast Asia.

Jackson called any push for a troop withdrawal “a very unpopular view in Washington.”

In the interview, Bannon also called the North Korean nuclear crisis “a sideshow” to a larger issue, which he said was an ongoing economic battle with Beijing.

“We’re at economic war with China,” Bannon said. “It’s in all their literature. They’re not shy about saying what they’re doing. One of us is going to be a hegemon in 25 or 30 years and it’s gonna be them if we go down this path. On Korea, they’re just tapping us along. It’s just a sideshow.”

Bannon added that he was battling for the administration to take a harder line on China trade, rather than deferring such a decision in hopes of Beijing first reining in Pyongyang’s nuclear ambitions.

“To me,” Bannon said, “the economic war with China is everything. And we have to be maniacally focused on that. If we continue to lose it, we’re five years away, I think, ten years at the most, of hitting an inflection point from which we’ll never be able to recover.”

The fate of Bannon, a former CEO of the hard-right Breitbart news website, is reportedly up in the air after Trump said Tuesday that the White House would “see what happens with” him.

See also : https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20170817_24/

Make diplomacy the priority

August 19, 2017

EDITORIAL: Japan forgetting that diplomacy is key to crisis with N. Korea

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201708190037.html>

A meeting of foreign and defense policy chiefs from Japan and the United States on Aug. 17 was disturbingly dominated by military issues, with diplomacy taking a backseat.

It was the first gathering of the Japan-U.S. Security Consultative Committee since Donald Trump became president of the United States, and was held amid concerns over North Korea’s nuclear and missile programs.

Foreign Minister Taro Kono and Defense Minister Itsunori Onodera met in Washington with their U.S. counterparts, Secretary of State Rex Tillerson and Defense Secretary Jim Mattis.

Of course, we understand that a show of unity between the two allies based on their bilateral security alliance can serve as an effective deterrence with regard to North Korea, which has displayed provocative behavior with its repeated ballistic missile launches.

What is worrisome is the message that emerged from the meeting is focusing on defense policy issues, especially on an expanded role for Japan's Self-Defense Forces.

During the meeting, Japan promised the United States to implement a set of new defense policy actions. Tokyo said it will revise the National Defense Program Guidelines and introduce the land-based Aegis Ashore interceptor missile system, developed by the United States.

It also pledged to pursue “forms of further cooperation” between the two countries under new national security legislation and explore new types of military actions in such areas as intelligence, reconnaissance and training.

What Tokyo got from Washington in return was a promise to maintain “the nuclear umbrella” to protect Japan and reconfirmation of the U.S. commitment to applying Article 5 of the bilateral security treaty to

the disputed Senkaku Islands, which means the United States remains obliged to defend the islands under Japanese administration from enemy attack.

The promises made by Japan will all lead to an enhancement of the SDF's capabilities and an increase in Tokyo's defense spending.

The promise to purchase the costly U.S. missile defense system is apparently in line with the Trump administration's request.

But how does the Japanese government assess the wisdom of a further increase in its defense spending, which already tops 5 trillion yen (\$45.76 billion) annually? In particular, how does it view the cost effectiveness of the missile defense system?

The government should not be allowed to push through these measures without Diet debate on them simply because of promises made to the United States.

Prior to the Washington meeting, Onodera made comments that seemed to signal a military-oriented security policy agenda on the part of the Abe administration.

At a Lower House Security Committee meeting Aug. 10, Onodera said a North Korean missile attack against Guam, a U.S. military hub, would weaken the power of the United States, thereby putting Japan's existence in danger. This would allow Japan to exercise the right to collective self-defense.

In such a situation, Japan would try to intercept the North Korean missiles.

Onodera argued that a U.S. loss of strike power would give Japan the right to engage in collective self-defense. But such a situation was not discussed during the process of enacting national security legislation.

Onodera's words underscored afresh the possibility that the government could arbitrarily interpret the security legislation in ways that suit its agenda.

It would also be technically difficult for Japan to intercept Pyongyang's ballistic missiles flying toward Guam in the first place. Onodera's remark about shooting down North Korean missiles is divorced from reality.

Earlier this month, Mattis pointed out the tremendous risk of a military action against North Korea, saying the "tragedy of war" with the country would be "catastrophic."

The tragedy he referred to would take place in South Korea and Japan.

In the final analysis, there is no other option than pursuing a peaceful solution to the situation.

At the moment, Japan should focus on diplomatic actions to defuse the crisis that are based on cooperation with the United States and South Korea and involve China and Russia as well.

The Abe administration needs to make greater efforts to help ease the escalating tension between the United States and North Korea and move the situation toward dialogue with the aim of freezing North Korea's nuclear tests and missile launches.

--The Asahi Shimbun, Aug. 19

Young Japanese peace envoys in Geneva



High school peace ambassadors from Nagasaki Prefecture, at right, accept 1,000 paper “orizuru” cranes and signatures to be presented to the United Nations calling for a nuclear-free world, on Aug. 11. (Rui Morimoto)

August 22, 2017

Young Japanese envoys kept off anti-nuke stage in Geneva

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201708220048.html>

By KEITA MANO/ Staff Writer

Japanese high school students at the annual Conference on Disarmament in Geneva were not allowed to offer speeches on Aug. 22 after other countries questioned their participation on the podium, according to the Japanese government.

The refusal came after Japanese students, who were chosen as peace envoys, have spoken at the three previous conferences since 2014, calling for nuclear disarmament.

“There were other countries questioning the appropriateness of allowing Japanese high school peace envoys to make a speech as an exceptional case,” said a Japanese government representative at the conference.

The 22 high school students were selected from across Japan as peace ambassadors. In previous years, they played roles in gathering signatures and giving speeches at the main session at the Conference on Disarmament at the United Nations Office in Geneva as temporary representatives of the Japanese government.

This year, however, the students were only allowed to talk to and exchange ideas with diplomacy corps of other countries at a reception prepared by the Japanese government on the sidelines of the conference, which is being held from Aug. 21-25.

The Japanese government representative said, “Since the conference has a rule of adopting a unanimous vote, the decision was made to place importance on the concerns of the other countries.”

The official added, “the nuclear ban treaty (which the Japanese government has announced it will not join) bears no relation to the decision at all.”

At the Conference on Disarmament, diplomats and other representatives conduct disarmament negotiations among the 65 member countries.

On Aug. 22, outside the conference, the Japanese high students as scheduled presented signatures they collected from the public in seeking a nuclear-free world to the U.N. Office for Disarmament Affairs.

Japanese teens meet nuclear disarmament envoys

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20170822_09/

Japanese students have conveyed atomic bomb survivors' appeal for a nuclear-free world to envoys of a UN conference on disarmament.

The Permanent Mission of Japan to the International Organizations in Geneva hosted on Monday exchanges between senior high school students and representatives from more than 30 countries involved in nuclear disarmament.

22 young people from across Japan, including students from the atomic bombed cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, took part in the event.

Japan's ambassador in charge of disarmament, Nobushige Takamizawa, said he wanted both sides to exchange views freely.

Miharu Kobayashi, a third-generation hibakusha, or atomic bomb survivor, spoke about her great-grandmother who died from radiation exposure after the 1945 nuclear attack on Hiroshima.

Kobayashi said the atomic bombing left many deep scars both on people's bodies and in their hearts, and those scars have never disappeared.

She stressed that she will do her utmost to pass on the voices of hibakusha to people everywhere in order to create a peaceful world without nuclear weapons.

Kazuki Sato from Osaka said it's difficult to realize a nuclear-free future when there are countries relying on nuclear weapons.

But he said the world is gradually taking steps forward, as shown in the adoption at the UN of a treaty banning nuclear arms.

Japanese students have given speeches calling for the abolition of nuclear weapons to meetings of the UN Conference on Disarmament for the past 3 years.

But this year they were not allowed to do that.

Ambassador Takamizawa told NHK that some countries have expressed their opposition to the speeches.

He denied that Japan's absence from the nuclear ban treaty had anything to do with the decision.

Continue the war games or rely on dialogue?

U.S. Pacific Command chief says diplomacy — not military action — key to North Korea crisis

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2017/08/22/asia-pacific/u-s-pacific-command-chief-says-diplomacy-not-military-action-key-north-korea-crisis/#.WZwgGsZpyos>

Reuters, AP

OSAN, SOUTH KOREA – The head of the U.S. military's Pacific Command said on Tuesday it was more important to use diplomacy to counter North Korea's missile threat rather than consider what actions by the reclusive North might trigger a pre-emptive strike.

Adm. Harry Harris was in South Korea to observe annual joint military drills with the South Korean military, which the North called a step toward nuclear conflict masterminded by the U.S. and South Korean "war maniacs."

"So we hope and we work for diplomatic solutions to the challenge presented by Kim Jong Un," Harris told reporters at a U.S. air base in South Korea about an hour from the capital, Seoul, referring to the North Korean leader.

He said diplomacy was "the most important starting point" in response to the North's threat, when asked what actions by North Korea might trigger a pre-emptive U.S. strike against Pyongyang.

"As far as a timeline, it would be crazy for me to share with you those tripwires in advance. If we did that, it would hardly be a military strategy," he added.

North Korea has pursued missile and nuclear tests in defiance of U.N. Security Council resolutions and ignored all calls, including from lone major ally China, to stop. It justifies its weapons programs by pointing to perceived U.S. hostility and regularly threatens to destroy the United States.

The United States and South Korea began long-planned joint military exercises on Monday called the Ulchi Freedom Guardian (UFG), which the allies have said were purely defensive and did not aim to increase tension on the Korean Peninsula.

The drills end on Aug. 31 and involve tens of thousands of troops as well as computer simulations designed to prepare for war with a nuclear-capable North Korea.

A North Korean military spokesman repeated the threat of "merciless retaliation" against the United States for readying a preemptive strike and a war of aggression, using the drills as an excuse to mount such an attack.

"The U.S. will be wholly held accountable for the catastrophic consequences to be entailed by such reckless aggressive war maneuvers, as it chose a military confrontation," the unnamed spokesman said in comments carried by the North's official KCNA news agency.

The North claims the drills are an invasion rehearsal, senior U.S. military commanders on Tuesday dismissed calls to pause or downsize exercises they called crucial to countering a clear threat from Pyongyang.

The heated North Korean rhetoric, along with occasional weapons tests, is standard fare during the spring and summer war games by allies Seoul and Washington, but always uneasy ties between the Koreas are worse than normal this year following weeks of tit-for-tat threats between U.S. President Donald Trump and Pyongyang in the wake of the North's two intercontinental ballistic missile tests last month.

There have been calls in both the United States and South Korea to postpone or modify the drills in an attempt to ease hostility on the Korean Peninsula following North Korea's threat to lob missiles toward the U.S. territory of Guam. But Harris and a visiting group of senior U.S. military commanders said that the drills are critical for the allies to maintain readiness against an aggressive North Korea.

Vincent Brooks, commander of U.S. Forces Korea, said the allies should continue the war games until they "have reason not to."

"That reason has not yet emerged," he said.

The U.S. military officials were to travel to the site of a contentious U.S. missile-defense system in South Korea later Tuesday.

The North's military said in a statement that it will launch an unspecified "merciless retaliation and unsparing punishment" on the United States over the UFG drills that began Monday for an 11-day run. Despite the threat, an unprompted direct attack is extremely unlikely because the United States vastly outguns Pyongyang, which values the continuation of its dictatorship above all else. Impoverished North Korea hates the drills in part because they force it to respond with expensive military measures of its own. The North Korean statement accused the United States of deploying unspecified "lethal" weapons for the drills that it says involve a "beheading operation" training aimed at removing absolute ruler Kim. "No one can vouch that these huge forces concentrated in South Korea will not go over to an actual war action now that the military tensions have reached an extreme pitch in the Korean Peninsula," the statement said. "Moreover, high-ranking bosses of the U.S. imperialist aggressor forces flew into South Korea to hold a war confab. Such huddle is increasing the gravity of the situation."

Sen. Edward Markey, a Massachusetts Democrat who visited Seoul with other lawmakers, said Tuesday that dialogue would be the best way to defuse the North Korean nuclear standoff though he argued that the United States and its allies must be ready to respond to potential aggression by North Korea with "overwhelming force."

"Talking with North Korea is not a concession; it is the only way to reach an agreement to denuclearize the Korean Peninsula and to reinforce that our military strength is there only to deter aggression and to defend against attack," Markey told a news conference.

The UFG drills are largely computer-simulated war games held every summer, and this year's exercise involves 17,500 American troops and 50,000 South Korean soldiers. No field training like live-fire exercises or tank maneuvering is involved in the UFG drills, in which alliance officers sit at computers to practice how they would engage in battles and hone their decision-making capabilities.

Nagasaki mayor calls on Govt. to help make UN ban more effective

August 24, 2017

Taue asks govt to link nuclear, non-nuclear powers

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20170824_01/

The mayor of Nagasaki has urged Japan's government to serve as a bridge between nuclear and non-nuclear powers so that the recently adopted UN treaty banning nuclear weapons will become more effective.

Mayor Tomihisa Taue made the request in writing, which he handed to Foreign Minister Taro Kono in Tokyo on Wednesday.

Nuclear powers, including the United States, and Japan, under the US nuclear umbrella, say they will not participate in the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons that was adopted at the United Nations last month.

In reply, Kono explained that he called on the US to work to ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty during his talks with Secretary of State Rex Tillerson last week.

He pledged that the government will continue to work to see that nuclear arms are eliminated.

Kono also referred to the UN Conference on Disarmament that was held in Geneva, Switzerland. At the conference, senior high school students from the A-bomb-hit Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were unable to give speeches calling for the abolition of nuclear weapons. They were told some countries had expressed opposition to their participation.

Kono reportedly told Taue that the government will discuss how Japan should make their appeal possible.

Taue later told reporters the treaty banning nuclear weapons may have been adopted, but that doesn't mean nuclear weapons will disappear. He says he wants the government to discuss ways to see how the treaty can be best utilized.

North Korea and diplomacy

August 24, 2017

U.S. Pacific Command chief says diplomacy — not military action — key to North Korea crisis

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2017/08/22/asia-pacific/u-s-pacific-command-chief-says-diplomacy-not-military-action-key-north-korea-crisis/#.WZwgGsZpyos>

Reuters, AP

OSAN, SOUTH KOREA – The head of the U.S. military's Pacific Command said on Tuesday it was more important to use diplomacy to counter North Korea's missile threat rather than consider what actions by the reclusive North might trigger a pre-emptive strike.

Adm. Harry Harris was in South Korea to observe annual joint military drills with the South Korean military, which the North called a step toward nuclear conflict masterminded by the U.S. and South Korean “war maniacs.”

“So we hope and we work for diplomatic solutions to the challenge presented by Kim Jong Un,” Harris told reporters at a U.S. air base in South Korea about an hour from the capital, Seoul, referring to the North Korean leader.

He said diplomacy was “the most important starting point” in response to the North’s threat, when asked what actions by North Korea might trigger a pre-emptive U.S. strike against Pyongyang.

“As far as a timeline, it would be crazy for me to share with you those tripwires in advance. If we did that, it would hardly be a military strategy,” he added.

North Korea has pursued missile and nuclear tests in defiance of U.N. Security Council resolutions and ignored all calls, including from lone major ally China, to stop. It justifies its weapons programs by pointing to perceived U.S. hostility and regularly threatens to destroy the United States.

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Sumiteru Taniguchi



Sumiteru Taniguchi, a survivor of the 1945 atomic bombing of Nagasaki, shows a photo of himself taken in 1945, during an interview at his office in Nagasaki on June 30, 2015. (AP file photo)

August 30, 017

Atomic bomb survivor Sumiteru Taniguchi dies

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20170830_80/

Atomic bomb survivor and prominent peace activist Sumiteru Taniguchi died of cancer on Wednesday morning. He was 88 years old.

Taniguchi survived the 1945 atomic bombing of Nagasaki. He was 16 at the time, and was about 1.8 kilometers away from ground zero when the bomb hit. He suffered severe burns on his back.

He appealed for the support of survivors and elimination of nuclear weapons throughout his life.

Ten years after the bombing, Taniguchi formed a group with other survivors who experienced the ordeal.

Taniguchi had served as a representative of Nihon Hidankyo, or the Japan Confederation of Atomic and Hydrogen Bomb Sufferers Organizations, since 2010.

He was also the head of the atomic bomb survivors' association in Nagasaki since 2006.

In 2010 Taniguchi shared with the world his horrific experience by showing a picture of him taken just after the bombing at a Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference at the UN headquarters.

Last month, he welcomed the adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. The Treaty prohibits development, possession and use of nuclear weapons. But he said he felt uneasy thinking about how the world would be after all the people who had experienced the inhumanity of nuclear weapons

have died.

Another representative of Nihon Hidankyo, Terumi Tanaka, told reporters that he is very sad to hear of Taniguchi's death. He said Taniguchi devoted his life to the goal of eliminating nuclear weapons, while entering and leaving hospital frequently.

Tanaka said Taniguchi's death will be a great loss for the peace activities promoted by the atomic bomb survivors.

The head of the atomic bomb survivors' group in Hiroshima, Sunao Tsuboi, says he feels sad at having lost longtime fellow activist Sumiteru Taniguchi.

Tsuboi issued a statement expressing respect for Taniguchi's accomplishments.

He vowed to continue working with the few remaining atomic bomb survivors to abolish nuclear weapons.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe told reporters he'd met Taniguchi when he visited Nagasaki. He offered his heartfelt condolences.

See also:

<https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/videos/20170830153601369/>

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201708300057.html>

It must never be forgotten



Sumiteru Taniguchi bares his scarred back in 2005. (Asahi Shimbun file photo)

August 31, 2017

VOX POPULI: A-bomb survivor Taniguchi led a life of pain, but it was not in vain

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201708310022.html>

Sumiteru Taniguchi, a Nagasaki hibakusha (A-bomb survivor), weighed himself every night. Even a slight weight gain had the effect of pulling and ripping the skin on his back, causing excruciating pain. He constantly strove not to gain more than three kilos, according to "Ikiteiru Kagiri Katari Tsuzukeru" (I will keep speaking as long as I am alive), a picture book about Taniguchi by Ai Tatebayashi.

In managing his health, his indispensable partner was his wife, Eiko, until her death in spring 2016.

Every night, Eiko applied an ointment and moisturizer on his back. But he suffered greatly from tumors that kept growing. "It felt like sleeping on a mattress sprinkled with stones," Taniguchi recalled. "The pain kept me awake."

Totally devoted as Eiko was to her husband, she sobbed when she saw his mangled back for the first time. She knew nothing of the reality of the effects of radiation exposure from the atomic bombing. Realizing her husband could not stay alive without her constant support, she committed herself to caring for him. Taniguchi, who became a vocal activist for a treaty banning nuclear weapons, died on Aug. 30. He was 88. He was 16 years old when the city of Nagasaki was leveled by atomic bombing on Aug. 9, 1945. He joined an anti-nuclear movement early on, but preferred to remain in the background, refusing to be treated like a freak show specimen.

But he had a change of heart at age 41, when he discovered that he was the boy in a harrowing picture taken by a U.S. research team at the onset of the postwar Allied occupation of Japan. The boy is shown lying prone with vacant eyes, his entire back burned raw and scarlet.

Taniguchi resolved to devote his life to testifying to the horror of nuclear weapons.

Seven years ago, he gave a speech at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, holding up that famous picture that shows his "Akai senaka" (Scarlet back): "I am not a guinea pig, nor am I an exhibit. But you who are here today, please don't turn your eyes away from me. Please look at me again."

The photo aroused controversy in Japan as well as abroad. One exhibition was canceled because the image was deemed too graphic and disturbing.

Had Taniguchi himself not begged people to not avert their eyes, the picture probably would have been seen by many fewer people.

Once seen, Taniguchi's back simply cannot be unseen. And it must never be forgotten.

N. Korea's development of nuclear weapons

September 3, 2017

Path to nuclear weapons

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20170903_30/

Since taking power 5 years ago, North Korea's leader, Kim Jong Un, has made developing nuclear weapons a top priority.

In just over a decade, North Korea has conducted 5 nuclear tests, each one more powerful than the last.

The last one took place in September 2016, on the country's 68th anniversary. North Korea's state-run television, KRT, announced that the country had successfully tested a newly developed warhead to measure its force.

North Korea believes these tests prove it's a nuclear power and promotes them domestically to instill national pride. KRT said North Korea is "the strongest nuclear power on Earth."

Tests have been occurring with increasing frequency under Kim Jong Un. The latest is the third since he took power in 2012.

His father, Kim Jong Il, conducted 2 nuclear tests during his 17-year-rule.

The country began expanding its nuclear program with help from the Soviet Union during the 1980s.

All experiments have taken place at the Punggye-ri test site in the northeastern part of the country.

At the heart of the program is a 5,000 kilowatt experimental reactor, which is believed to be used to extract plutonium.

In 2007, just one year after its first nuclear test, North Korea agreed to deactivate the reactor following 6-party talks with South Korea, Japan, China, Russia and the United States.

However, the isolated nation changed its mind in 2015. The state-run media announced that all nuclear facilities, including a uranium enrichment plant and an experimental reactor, had been restarted.

Since then, the program has expanded. South Korea estimates the North possesses more than 50 kilograms of plutonium that could be used to make up to 12 nuclear bombs. Observers say that number could be even higher. In his new year's address, Kim promoted his regime's nuclear ambitions.

Kim said, "Phenomenal events to strengthen our defensive power have repeatedly taken place. We have secured powerful military assets that can protect the destiny of our nation and our people. We will successfully push ahead with the establishment of a powerful socialist nation."

Despite increased sanctions and international condemnation, Pyongyang has shown no sign of halting its weapons programs.

US media recently reported that US intelligence officials believe the North is now capable of producing a nuclear warhead small enough to fit on the end of a missile.

Experts say this analysis shows that the country's nuclear program is advancing much more quickly than previously thought.

see also :

<https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/videos/20170903191813361/>

NHK video: Expert view on nuclear test North Korea's new tactics

September 4, 2017

N.Korea changes tactics with nuclear test

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20170904_02/

North Korea took the unusual step of announcing Sunday's nuclear test by first releasing a photo of what it claimed was a hydrogen bomb.

It was the North's 6th nuclear test conducted at a site in Punggye-ri in the country's northeast.

Pyongyang later announced through state-run media that it had successfully tested a hydrogen bomb that can become the warhead for an intercontinental ballistic missile.

Just 3 hours before the test, state-run Korean Central Television known as KRT reported that North leader Kim Jong Un inspected the bomb at a nuclear weapons research institute. KRT also aired a photo of a gourd-shaped metallic object.

State-run media also published reports, with pictures, that just before the test Kim and all 4 members of the politburo standing committee issued the order to carry out the test.

It's quite unusual for North Korea to release photos of what it claims is a nuclear bomb, as well as those of Kim and the politburo members making their decision before conducting a nuclear test.

North Korea says Sunday's test generated much bigger force than any other tests in the past.

South Korea's meteorological agency also estimates the bomb's blast yield at an all-time high of 50 to 60 kilotons.

Analysts say the North tried to show the rest of the world the steady progress it is making in developing powerful and small nuclear weapons, while working to complete an intercontinental ballistic missile capable of hitting the continental United States.

They say the North leadership also tried to further strengthen Kim's authority ahead of the National Foundation Day on September 9th.

North Korea crisis

September 4, 2017

N. Korean threat increases with possibility of miniaturized nuclear weapons

<https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20170904/p2a/00m/0na/015000c>

North Korea went ahead with its sixth nuclear test on Sept. 3 despite repeated sanctions from the international community, with a detonation far more powerful than its previous one.

- **【Related】** North Korea says 6th nuke test was H-bomb, 'perfect success'
- **【Related】** UN Security Council sets emergency meeting on N. Korea blast
- **【Related】** Abe, Trump agree to increase pressure on N. Korea after nuclear test

With the reclusive state extending the range of its ballistic missiles while rapidly developing nuclear weapons, it now poses a far greater threat than in the past. In the meantime, it appears that the international community has been left with a sense of powerlessness when it comes to preventing the country from developing such weapons.

In a broadcast at around 3 p.m. on Sept. 3 local time, about three hours after the nuclear test, North Korean news presenter Ri Chun Hee declared in a strong voice that the North had successfully tested a hydrogen bomb with a level of power on a practically unprecedented scale. The news broadcast said that leader Kim Jong Un, chairman of the Worker's Party of Korea, had signed the order to carry out the test. According to the Japan Meteorological Agency (JMA), North Korea's previous five underground nuclear tests produced earthquakes with magnitudes ranging between 4.9 and 5.3. The magnitude of the tremor from the latest test was 6.1, making it around 10 times stronger, by conservative estimates, than the previous test in September 2016, which produced a magnitude-5.3 temblor.

Japan's Defense Minister Itsunori Onodera said that the scale of the latest detonation was estimated at about 70 kilotons, which would be a record high.

Tetsuo Sawada, an assistant professor at Tokyo Institute of Technology, who specializes in nuclear engineering, touched on the fact that the quake from the latest test recorded by the JMA was nearly one whole point higher than that of the previous test, saying, "From the size we can assume that it was a hydrogen bomb." However, it is difficult to actually verify whether it was a hydrogen bomb or not. Sawada points out that verification requires detection of helium-3, which is produced during nuclear fusion. Since helium-3 is lighter than air, it quickly spreads into the atmosphere, so detection becomes harder as time passes, Sawada says.

When North Korea conducted its fourth nuclear test in January 2016, it claimed that it was an experimental hydrogen bomb. But for reasons including the relatively small scale of the explosion, U.S. experts took the view there was a high possibility it was not a fusion-type hydrogen bomb like those possessed by the United States and Russia, but a boosted fission bomb that uses a small amount of fusion fuel to increase the yield of the fission reaction.

Tatsujiro Suzuki, director of the Research Center for Nuclear Weapons Abolition (RECNA) at Nagasaki University, commented, "There is a high possibility this time that it was another boosted weapon."

In any case, the technology to produce boosted weapons would allow North Korea to miniaturize its nuclear warheads, and load them onto intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs).

"It probably wants to secure nuclear deterrence as early as possible to ward off a pre-emptive attack by the United States," Suzuki conjectured.

Soon, 11 years will have passed since North Korea's first nuclear test on Oct. 9, 2006. The country is beefing up its nuclear arsenal at a rapid pace. Pakistani nuclear physicist Samar Mubarakmand, who led Pakistan's nuclear weapons test in May 1998, said that as of February 2013, Pakistan was developing about one nuclear bomb every six months. Abdul Qadeer Khan, who has been nicknamed Pakistan's "father of the atomic bomb" and who provided uranium enrichment technology to North Korea in the late 1990s, praised North Korea's nuclear technology, writing that North Korea's nuclear bomb designs were more advanced than Pakistan's.

North Korea has rapidly developed nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles with the United States in its sights. "With the latest ICBMs, North Korea could fit them with multiple bombs, and have them head to several different places at the same time. There is now a taste of reality to full deployment," Sawada says. U.S. missile experts have said North Korea's missiles lack accuracy, but with higher explosive power they become harder to intercept -- so a nuclear attack would still be effective even if the nuclear weapon exploded slightly off target. By acquiring the technology to produce powerful nuclear weapons along with its ballistic missile technology, the threat North Korea poses to the United States increases dramatically. In June last year, North Korea started testing ballistic missiles on lofted trajectories. Yoji Koda, former Maritime Self-Defense Force Fleet commander, analyzes its move as follows: "The assumption is that they've nearly perfected an object that's going to be made to re-enter the atmosphere, and there has arisen a need for them to acquire relevant data. It probably means that over the year from September last year, they've been near completion of a miniaturized nuclear warhead that can be fitted onto the Hwasong-14 (ICBM)."

The New York Times on the N. Korean bomb

September 3, 2017

North Korea Says It Tested a Hydrogen Bomb Meant for Missiles

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/09/03/world/asia/north-korea-tremor-possible-6th-nuclear-test.html>
By CHO E SANG-HUN and DAVID E. SANGER/SEPT. 2, 2017

SEOUL, South Korea — North Korea carried out its sixth and most powerful nuclear test early Sunday in an extraordinary show of defiance against President Trump, who responded by declaring the country “hostile and dangerous to the United States” and criticizing an American ally, South Korea, for “talk of appeasement.”

The underground blast, which caused tremors that were felt in both South Korea and China, was the first by the North to clearly surpass the destructive power of the bombs dropped on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in World War II.

The government said it had tested a hydrogen bomb that could be mounted on an intercontinental ballistic missile, and hours before the detonation, it released photographs of its leader, Kim Jong-un, examining what it said was the new weapon.

Hydrogen bombs are vastly more powerful than ordinary atomic weapons, and though some analysts were skeptical of the North’s claim, the early analysis indicated the device caused a blast that was roughly four times more powerful than anything the North has detonated before.

Mr. Trump threatened last month to bring “fire and fury” to North Korea if it continued to threaten the United States with nuclear missiles, and two weeks ago, after a brief lull in the North’s testing, he said he thought Mr. Kim “respected” him and might be ready to turn to negotiations.

But the test, which followed the launch last week of a ballistic missile over Japan into the north Pacific, appeared to prompt another shift in tone by Mr. Trump, who responded on Twitter with posts that suggested anger at the North but also frustration with China and, notably, South Korea.

“North Korea is a rogue nation which has become a great threat and embarrassment to China, which is trying to help but with little success,” he said. “South Korea is finding, as I have told them, that their talk of appeasement with North Korea will not work, they only understand one thing!”

The president’s options are limited. Although the Pentagon has revised its military options for strikes against missile and nuclear sites, and Mr. Trump’s aides have talked about how a “preventive war” might be necessary, the risk of rekindling the Korean War looms large.

South Korea, which has urged talks to resolve the crisis, is particularly vulnerable because much of its population is within range of the North’s artillery. Mr. Trump’s undisguised swipe at the South for “appeasement” was certain to exacerbate fears that the United States might put it in danger. And it threatened a new rift in relations that are already strained because of Mr. Trump’s threats to withdraw from a trade deal.

Other possible responses include new cyber strikes, of the kind that the United States has attempted against the missile program, or a more comprehensive embargo on trade with the North, including cutoffs of the North’s energy supplies. But both approaches would require the help of China and Russia, and neither has seemed eager to do anything that could lead to a collapse of the North Korean regime.

The United States Geological Survey estimated that the tremor set off by the blast, detected at 12:36 p.m. at the Punggye-ri underground test site in northwestern North Korea, had a magnitude of 6.3.

The South Korean Defense Ministry’s estimate was much lower, at 5.7, but even that would mean a blast “five to six times” as powerful as the North’s last nuclear test, a year ago, said Lee Mi-sun, a senior analyst at the South Korean Meteorological Administration.

The tremor from the North was strong enough to be felt by some people in South Korea. The South’s National Fire Agency, which operates an emergency hotline, said it had received 31 calls about buildings

and the ground shaking, the first time that South Koreans had reported tremors after a North Korean nuclear detonation.

The blast was so powerful that the first tremor was followed by a second, weaker one minutes later, which the United States Geological Survey called a “collapse.” The second tremor was detected in China but not in South Korea; officials in the South said that would be consistent with a cave-in at the North’s underground test site.

Condemnation of the test came from around the world. In Asia, President Moon Jae-in of South Korea, a proponent of dialogue with North Korea, called the test “utterly disappointing and infuriating.”

China, the North’s main ally and biggest trading partner, expressed “strong condemnation” of the test, according to Xinhua, the state news agency. Japan requested an emergency meeting of the United Nations Security Council.

In Europe, the Russian Foreign Ministry said that North Korea “deserves absolute condemnation,” and a joint statement from Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany and President Emmanuel Macron of France said “the most recent provocation from Pyongyang reaches a new dimension.”

The International Atomic Energy Agency said the test amounted to a “complete disregard of the repeated demands of the international community.”

Just last week, North Korea fired a ballistic missile over Japan, sharply escalating tensions in the region. Pyongyang recently launched an intercontinental ballistic missile capable of reaching the American mainland, and it responded to Mr. Trump’s “fire and fury” rhetoric by threatening to fire missiles into waters around Guam, a United States territory that is home to military bases.

The timing of the test on Sunday was almost certainly no coincidence: It came during the American Labor Day weekend, and the anniversary of the founding of the North Korean government is Saturday.

The North has often tried to catch its enemies in Washington off guard by conducting major weapons tests around American holidays — Mr. Kim called his country’s first ICBM test, conducted on July 4, a “gift package for the Yankees” — or timed them to coincide with its own holidays for domestic propaganda uses.

On Sunday, North Korea gave its people and the outside world notice of “an important announcement” to come, followed hours later with confirmation of the test and Mr. Kim’s handwritten order to conduct it. In the coming days, the government is expected to organize huge rallies to celebrate the bomb test and Mr. Kim’s leadership.

“Pyongyang has a playbook of strategic provocations, throws off its adversaries through graduated escalation, and seeks maximum political impact by conducting weapons tests on major holidays,” said Lee Sung-yoon, a Korea expert at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University.

North Korea has conducted a series of nuclear and ballistic missile tests since 2006. Its previous nuclear tests have produced increasingly larger blasts. The last test, in September 2016, yielded one about as powerful as the bomb the United States dropped on Hiroshima in 1945.

In its fourth nuclear test, in January 2016, North Korea claimed to have used a hydrogen bomb. Other countries dismissed the claim for lack of evidence, but experts have said that the North may have tested a “boosted” atomic bomb by using tritium, a common enhancement technique that produces a higher explosive yield.

Hydrogen bombs and atomic bombs both work by detonating nuclear energy in an explosive chain reaction. But hydrogen devices can be much more powerful because they use a second stage that boosts the chain reaction, unleashing more explosive force.

Analysts noted that the device in the photo that the North released on Sunday — whether real or a mock-up — was shaped like a two-stage thermonuclear device. David Albright, president of the Washington-

based Institute for Science and International Security, said he doubted the device was real, but he said there was strong evidence that the North had been working on thermonuclear weapons.

“The size of the seismic signal of the recent test suggests a significantly higher explosive yield than the fifth test,” Mr. Albright said. “Getting this high of a yield would likely require thermonuclear material in the device.” But he said he was “skeptical that this design has been miniaturized to fit reliably on a ballistic missile.”

With his options limited, Mr. Trump has turned to the same strategy his predecessors have tried: increasing economic pressure and threatening military force, though Mr. Trump has used more provocative rhetoric about a potential military response than his predecessors did.

Another strategic consideration in responding to a nuclear blast is China. While the country’s president, Xi Jinping, fears that a collapse in North Korea could lead to a wave of hungry refugees and a scramble for North Korea’s territory and nuclear weapons, he has shown signs of losing patience with Mr. Kim, recently agreeing to stronger United Nations sanctions against Pyongyang.

The test’s timing was a major embarrassment for Mr. Xi, who on Sunday was hosting a summit meeting of the so-called BRICS countries — Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.

Peter Hayes, director of Nautilus, a United States-based research institute specializing in North Korea, said the test seemed intended to jolt Mr. Xi, and to convince him that he needed to persuade the United States to talk to North Korea.

“It’s aimed more at Xi than Trump,” Mr. Hayes said. “Kim Jong-un doesn’t have the leverage to get Washington to talk. Xi has real power to affect the calculations in Washington. He’s putting pressure on China to say to Trump, you have to sit down with Kim Jong-un.”

Choe Sang-Hun reported from Seoul, and David E. Sanger from Washington. Reporting was contributed by Jane Perlez from Beijing, Motoko Rich from Tokyo, Dan Bilefsky from London and Melissa Eddy from Berlin.

North Korea's nuclear crisis (selection of articles from the Japanese press)

September 4, 2017

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2017/09/04/editorials/pyongyang-ratchets-provocations/>

Pyongyang ratchets up its provocations

While North Korea’s claim that it successfully tested a “two-stage thermonuclear weapon” capable of being carried by an intercontinental ballistic missile on Sunday cannot be verified, its latest nuclear test shows once again that the threat posed by its nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programs is increasing as time passes and the international community remains unable to take effective steps to halt the Kim regime’s dangerous provocations. This must change.

Pressure on North Korea must be increased and efforts made to close the loopholes that have enabled Pyongyang to mitigate the impact of such efforts and continue its weapons development programs. At the same time, diplomatic efforts directly involving North Korea should be explored to ensure that the worst-

case scenario of a military conflict — which would be too costly for countries in the region including Japan — can be averted.

North Korea's claim that it has succeeded in building a miniaturized hydrogen bomb that can be attached to an ICBM has been met with skepticism. But the power of the blast on Sunday, as estimated by the size of temblors caused by the explosion and observed by authorities outside the country, was reportedly several times larger than the last nuclear test conducted by Pyongyang nearly a year ago — and the largest since the regime carried out its first nuclear test in 2006. Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga said the possibility that it was indeed a hydrogen bomb could not be ruled out.

North Korea, meanwhile, has steadily continued to upgrade and diversified its ballistic missile technology, which would be used to deliver its nuclear bombs. In July, Pyongyang twice test-fired what was deemed its first ICBM, the Hwasong-14, which can likely reach the United States mainland. After threatening to fire intermediate-range missiles into the sea off the U.S. territory of Guam, North Korea last week fired such a missile over Hokkaido — a reminder that Japan is well within the range of its ballistic missiles.

North Korea has defied international pressure, including United Nations Security Council resolutions and economic sanctions, in the pursuit of its nuclear and missile programs. New resolutions and additional — and likely tougher — sanctions will be mulled in the wake of the latest nuclear weapons test. But past experience suggests that a UNSC resolution and sanctions will have a limited effect on Pyongyang's actions.

It is believed that Kim's regime, by ratcheting up the threat of its nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles, is aiming to force the United States to engage in dialogue and ultimately recognize Pyongyang's status as a nuclear power, thereby ensuring its survival. On the other hand, the U.S. and the rest of the international community see dialogue with North Korea as a means to denuclearize the regime. Such a gap — and the grave security threat that North Korea as a nuclear weapons power poses to East Asia — are said to stand in the way of possible talks to resolve the crisis.

The impasse over what the aim of dialogue should be will not be easily resolved — especially between North Korea and the U.S. But in the meantime, North Korea will continue to hone its ballistic missiles and nuclear arms capabilities, raising the threat they pose and the stakes in a possible military clash. The administration of U.S. President Donald Trump says it has “many military options” to counter the threat posed by North Korea. There is no guarantee, however, that a military solution to the crisis would not be accompanied by immense damage to neighboring countries such as South Korea and Japan.

Diplomatic efforts will ultimately be the only way to avert such a worst-case scenario. The question of whether North Korea should or should not be recognized as a nuclear weapons power — if that is a major obstacle to even entering any talk with Pyongyang — may be irrelevant given that it already possesses nuclear arms and that countries effectively deal with the North as a nuclear power. The denuclearization of North Korea must be pursued, but what is urgently needed is a diplomatic framework that aims to stop Pyongyang from moving even further with its nuclear and missile development.

China and Russia, which have often been accused of providing the loopholes that allow North Korea to escape the brunt of international sanctions, should be called upon to play meaningful roles in building such a framework. Trump has tweeted that the U.S. will consider “stopping all trade with any country doing business with North Korea.” Whether or not such a step is feasible, the Trump administration will likely push Moscow and Beijing to agree to tougher sanctions on Pyongyang at the U.N. Security Council.

Both China and Russia should accept their responsibility to help rein in North Korea and contribute to a diplomatic solution to the crisis.

South Korea's Moon faces calls to alter policy on North after nuclear test

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2017/09/05/asia-pacific/politics-diplomacy-asia-pacific/south-koreas-moon-faces-calls-alter-policy-north-nuclear-test/#.Wa6IIMZpyos>

Reuters

SEOUL – North Korea has been condemned internationally for conducting its most powerful nuclear test yet, but, across the border, South Korean President Moon Jae-in is also attracting flak for his policy of pursuing engagement with Pyongyang.

Rebuked by U.S. President Donald Trump, Moon is facing growing calls at home to change course and take a tougher line against North Korea, even from his core support base of young liberals, according to hundreds of comments posted online.

Moon, who swept to power after winning a May 9 election, remains hugely popular but his policy of pursuing both pressure and dialogue with the North is now under scrutiny.

Trump was blunt about the situation facing South Korea, one of Washington's biggest allies in Asia.

"South Korea is finding, as I have told them, that their talk of appeasement with North Korea will not work, they (North Korea) only understand one thing," he said in a tweet on Sunday, after the nuclear test.

Within South Korea, doubts about the "Moonshine" policy of engaging the North have been growing in recent weeks because there has been no change in the pace of the North's ballistic missile testing since Moon took office.

The North twice test-fired intercontinental ballistic missiles in July. Now, despite international warnings, it conducted its sixth and most powerful nuclear test Sunday.

"You said you will not have dialogue with the North if the North conducts a nuclear test. Keep your word," said a post on the Facebook page of the presidential Blue House from a user named Kim Bojoong.

Moon said during his campaign for the presidency that dialogue would be "impossible for quite some time" if the North were to go ahead with another nuclear test.

However, Moon indicated on Sunday at a National Security Council meeting that he had not given up on talks with the North, a sentiment he repeated on Monday in a telephone call with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe.

"Pressure must be strengthened until the North comes to the table for dialogue," the presidential Blue House quoted Moon as telling Abe.

In another post on the palace's Facebook page, user Shin Sanggyun said: "We know things are tough for you, mister president, but our response to the North's nuclear pursuit has been rather feeble."

It is time South Korea start considering using its shipbuilding expertise to build nuclear submarines and junior aircraft carriers, Shin said.

The Facebook posts were among hundreds of similar messages left on official social media maintained and monitored by the Blue House including its Twitter account and on the country's largest Naver.com web portal.

Sentiment expressed on South Korea's social media, where users are predominantly people in their 20s and 30s, has been a barometer of political support for Moon, a former human rights lawyer swept to power by an anti-graft movement that brought down his predecessor, President Park Geun-hye.

Moon's support rating has slipped slightly in recent days but he remains hugely popular. A public opinion survey by the Realmeter polling agency conducted two days before Sunday's nuclear test and released Monday showed support for Moon fell by 0.8 percentage points from a week ago to 73.1 percent.

But support among youngsters was strong with Moon getting an 85 percent approval rating among people in their 20s.

South Korea's conservative opposition parties said the Moon government's expectations about North Korea were unrealistic and isolating the country from its allies.

"While the Moon Jae-in government made appeasement gestures and haggled for dialogue despite the North's continued provocations, we have become a nuclear hostage," a senior Liberal Korea Party member, Kim Tae-heum, said on Monday.

Moon's push for dialogue was bound to hit a dead end because Pyongyang never really considered the South as a dialogue partner, said Kim Jun-seok, political diplomacy professor at Dongguk University in Seoul.

"They have to acknowledge us as a partner for talks, but all North Korea wants is to talk with the United States," Kim said.

News Navigator: Why is N. Korea developing a hydrogen bomb?

<https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20170905/p2a/00m/0na/015000c>

The Mainichi answers some questions readers may have about North Korea's nuclear program and its use as a possible negotiation tool.

- **【Related】** US envoy tells UN: North Korean leader is 'begging for war'
- **【Related】** North Korea says it has successfully conducted test of H-bomb for missile
- **【Related】** N. Korean threat increases with possibility of miniaturized nuclear weapons

Question: Did North Korea conduct another nuclear test?

Answer: Yes, the North Korean government announced on Sept. 3 that it successfully tested a hydrogen bomb that can be mounted on its intercontinental ballistic missiles. The Japan Meteorological Agency estimates that the blast was roughly 10 times that of North Korea's previous nuclear test in September 2016 -- the largest yet.

While atomic bombs (A-bombs) use the energy produced by the fission of uranium or plutonium for a blast, hydrogen bombs (H-bombs) use hydrogen isotopes such as deuterium and tritium to create a nuclear fusion reaction with an energy output much greater than an atomic bomb. The H-bomb test the United States conducted on the Bikini Atoll in the Pacific Ocean in March 1954 was approximately 1,000 times the strength of the A-bomb detonated in Hiroshima.

Q: That's scary, isn't it?

A: The blast power isn't the only scary thing. The newly developed warheads are also reportedly capable of attack by electromagnetic pulse. By generating electromagnetic waves from the bomb blast, North Korea could mount an additional attack by disrupting the functions of information communications devices. A large-scale blackout could occur in the target city, paralyzing infrastructure and possibly causing a great deal of damage.

Q: Why is North Korea developing an H-bomb?

A: There is speculation that North Korea is developing powerful nuclear weapons in order to be recognized as a nuclear power by the United States and other nations. The Kim Jong Un regime is believed to also be creating leverage for future negotiations in hopes of guaranteeing the safety of the country. However, at the moment, it is unlikely that the United States and other countries will allow North Korea to possess such weapons, and will likely strengthen sanctions. (Answers by Aya Takeuchi, Foreign News Department)

Koizumi: NUke plants could become "missile targets"

September 9, 2017

Nuke plants could be 'missile targets': ex-PM Koizumi

<https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20170909/p2a/00m/0na/012000c>

OBAMA, Fukui -- Former Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi warned that nuclear power plants in Japan could become targets of missiles in reference to the recent spate of North Korea's missile launches.

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"Having nuclear plants is tantamount to possessing atomic bombs directed at the people of Japan," Koizumi said during a speech in Obama, Fukui Prefecture, on Sept. 8.

Referring to his historic visit to North Korea in 2002, which led to the return of some Japanese nationals abducted by North Korea, Koizumi noted that Pyongyang at the time had a contact point that enabled behind-the-scenes negotiations with Tokyo.

"The current leader (of North Korea) doesn't lend an ear to the international community. I feel sorry about a situation where the abduction issue hasn't been resolved," Koizumi said.

Prior to his speech, Koizumi met with Yasushi Chimura, 62, a former abductee by North Korea who returned to Japan in 2002 -- for the first time since Chimura's children were also brought back to Japan in 2004.

After the meeting, Chimura, a resident of Obama, said, "I want attention to be paid to the abduction issue, aside from the North's nuclear and missile programs. It would be difficult to resolve the abduction issue unless the prime minister is ready to visit North Korea."

Rumors about deaths from N.K.nuclear test

September 11, 2017

Source: Rumors spread in North about deaths from nuclear test

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201709110022.html>

By YOSHIHIRO MAKINO/ Correspondent

SEOUL--Rumors are spreading among North Korean citizens that people involved in or living near Pyongyang's latest nuclear test are dying or coming down with a strange illness, a source familiar with the country said.

"(Such rumors are circulating) because the (North Korean) government has not provided appropriate explanations about the nuclear test," the source said.

The rumors are spreading by word of mouth among citizens, including those working in markets, the source said. According to some unconfirmed reports, a worker involved in preparations for the testing of a hydrogen bomb has died.

"The Sept. 3 test caused a big earthquake, which shocked people," the source said. "That has also apparently led (to the spread of the rumors)."

The nuclear test, North Korea's sixth, was held in Punggyeri in Kilju county in North Hamgyong province. Following the test, North Korea announced: "Although the nuclear test was conducted with more power than those of the previous ones, it did not leak radioactive substances and had no influence on the surrounding ecological environments."

The South Korean government, citing its own analysis, said a tunnel used in the test might have caved in. On Sept. 8, Seoul also announced that it detected a minute amount of xenon, a radioactive substance. North Korea is maintaining a strict system to keep details of the nuclear test secret. For example, it has prohibited foreigners from exiting railway stations in Kilju county.

In addition, Pyongyang has not provided explanations to its citizens about the possible effects of radioactive substances on the human body.

Let's discuss strategy

September 8, 2017

Commentary / World

Kim Jong Un's nuclear strategy isn't mad

Since North Korea is rational, deterrence can still work

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2017/09/08/commentary/world-commentary/kim-jong-uns-nuclear-strategy-isnt-mad/#.WbOWqMZpyos>

by Tetsuo Kotani

A sense of alarm is rising throughout the world as North Korea follows up its war rhetoric with two intercontinental ballistic missile tests, a missile launch plan aimed at Guam, a missile launch over Japan, followed by its sixth nuclear — and possibly its first successful thermonuclear — bomb test. North Korea is on the verge of establishing the ability to mount a miniaturized thermonuclear warhead on an ICBM that could reach Washington, London or almost anywhere else.

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and his regime are making every effort to acquire nuclear deterrence vis-a-vis the United States without fear of failure and isolation. Kim may seem desperate and losing his senses. But make no mistake; he is not mad despite his unique appearance and belligerent rhetoric. On the contrary, his actions are rational when viewed from the perspective of nuclear deterrence theory.

It makes strategic sense for North Korea to develop multiple strike capabilities while enhancing their survivability with solid-fuel technology, road mobility and submarine-launch technology. North Korea must still successfully develop warhead re-entry technology and will also seek MIRV technology — placing multiple independent warheads on each ballistic missile — to make them more difficult for the U.S. to intercept. But it's a matter of when, not if.

North Korea's nuclear and missile program has its origin in former leader Kim Il Sung's statement in 1965, in which he ordered the military to develop long-range strike capabilities to attack Tokyo and Washington. North Korea failed to unify the Korean Peninsula during the Korean War due to the intervention by U.S.-led U.N. forces. Japan served as a logistics base during the war. In short, North Korea's nuclear and missile program aims to deter another U.S.-led military intervention. After several decades, North Korea is finally realizing its founder's long-cherished wish.

Japan has been within the reach of North Korea's short- and intermediate-range ballistic missiles, with or without chemical and biological warheads, since the early 1990s, while South Korea has been under the threat of a vast heavy artillery force deployed along the DMZ since the 1953 armistice. This force constitutes North Korea's actual deterrence against any U.S. "aggression." The U.S. set several red lines to stop North Korea's nuclear program but never enforced them due to the North's massive conventional war capabilities. As a result, those red lines became a red carpet.

In 1994, for instance, when the Clinton administration considered a preventive strike on North Korean nuclear facilities, the U.S. military estimated that 50,000 U.S. soldiers, 500,000 South Korean soldiers, and a million civilians, including 100,000 U.S. citizens, would be killed in 90 days. Those figures were unacceptable to President Bill Clinton. Today, 200,000 U.S. citizens live on the peninsula — a figure almost the same as the population of Pittsburgh. No U.S. president, not even Donald Trump, can easily make a

decision to use force to eliminate North Korea's nuclear and missile programs when it means sacrificing so many U.S. citizens.

In addition, Kim will soon acquire the ability to directly destroy any targets in Guam, Hawaii and the continental U.S. with nuclear-armed ballistic missiles. From the fates of Iraq President Saddam Hussein and Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi, Kim learned that countries which give up their nuclear ambitions will face regime change. So, dissuasion is no longer a realistic solution for the North.

Prevention is not a solution, either. North Korea is, whether people like it or not, a de facto nuclear weapon state with multiple delivery means. A preventive surgical strike would become a full-scale war with massive casualties on both sides, and could go nuclear.

This does not mean, however, that pre-emption is off the table. If North Korea poses an imminent threat, the U.S. and its allies should defend and defeat. Provocations by North Korea must also be proportionally responded to by the U.S. and its allies to prevent further escalation.

More importantly, the U.S. and its allies should enhance deterrence with massive retaliation and denial capabilities. North Korea's priority is survival and therefore it regards its nuclear arsenal as a deterrent rather than a device for aggression. Pyongyang has repeatedly announced that U.S. "hostility" is the main driver of its nuclear missile development. If so, the U.S. and its allies can deter North Korean aggression even after the desperate state obtains a nuclear deterrent. In short, North Korea's nuclear-armed ICBM is not a game changer.

But if Kim believes North Korea and the U.S. are mutually deterred and feels safe, he might try to coerce South Korea and Japan with nuclear blackmail to achieve his political objectives, such as the withdrawal of American troops from the two countries. As strategists say, it's a typical stability-instability paradox. To prevent North Korea from successfully decoupling the U.S. and its allies, Washington, Tokyo and Seoul should come up with a common strategic goal and a strategy to achieve it.

There is no easy, short-term solution. There needs to be a long-term strategy. Is denuclearization a realistic goal? Are we ready for nuclear arms control with North Korea? Are we willing to talk with Kim or are we seeking regime change? What is the best mix of pressure and engagement? How do we prevent North Korea from launching a desperate attack? Do we prefer a unified Korea or not? How do we strengthen trilateral cooperation for deterrence and defense? How do we engage with China, Russia and other reluctant partners? These are some of the questions that need to be answered to formulate a strategy.

It might take long to negotiate a trilateral strategy at a time when North Korea is about to obtain a nuclear deterrent. But since North Korea is rational, not mad, deterrence can work. Let's not discuss a U.S. preventive strike. Let's discuss strategy. There is no time to waste.

Tetsuo Kotani is a senior fellow at the Japan Institute of International Affairs. He covers Japan's security policy and the Japan-U.S. alliance.

Nuclear weapons: Where is the threshold?



September 11, 2017

Will Trump lower the nuclear bar?

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2017/09/11/commentary/world-commentary/will-trump-lower-nuclear-bar/#.WbZ1MsZpyot>

by George F. Will

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Air Force “sniffer plane” was collecting air samples off Russia’s Kamchatka Peninsula on Sept. 3, 1949, when it gathered evidence of radioactivity, confirming that the war-shattered Soviet Union had tested a nuclear device. The Soviets’ Aug. 29, 1949, test had come faster than expected. Dating from the detonation at Alamogordo, New Mexico, on July 16, 1945, the basic science of nuclear explosions is more than 72 years old — three years older than the North Korean nation. Ballistic missile technology is more than 60 years old. The problems of miniaturizing warheads for mounting on missiles, and of ensuring the warheads’ survival en route to targets, are not sufficient to stymie a nation — consider Pakistan, whose annual per capita income is less than \$2,000 — that is determined to have a nuclear arsenal.

North Korea has one and is developing ICBMs faster than expected and with ostentatious indifference to U.S. proclamations. On Jan. 2, President-elect Donald Trump scampered up the rhetorical escalation ladder, unlimbering his heavy artillery — an exclamation point — to tweet about North Korea’s promised ICBM test: “It won’t happen!” It did. North Korea’s most audacious act, firing a missile over Japan, came seven days after Secretary of State Rex Tillerson praised North Korea’s “restraint.”

Pyongyang’s “signaling” does not involve abstruse semiotics: It wants a nuclear arsenal, and as *The Economist* magazine says, the world’s unpalatable options are the improbable (productive negotiations), the feeble (more sanctions) and the terrifying (military pre-emption). Concerning the latter, there is no bright line, but there is a distinction to be drawn, however imprecisely, between pre-emptive war and

preventive war. The former constitutes self-defense in response to a clear and present danger — repelling an act of aggression presumed with reasonable certainty to be imminent. The latter is an act of anticipation — and, to be candid, of aggression — to forestall the emergence of a clear and present danger. When Trump threatened North Korea with “fire and fury like the world has never seen,” was he threatening to cross the nuclear weapons threshold? This has been contemplated before regarding North Korea. Former Gen. Douglas MacArthur, who had been fired by President Harry Truman for insubordination, handed President-elect Dwight Eisenhower a memorandum on how “to clear North Korea of enemy forces”: “This could be accomplished through the atomic bombing of enemy military concentrations and installations in North Korea and the sowing of fields of suitable radio-active materials, the by-product of atomic manufacture, to close major lines of enemy supply and communication. ...” MacArthur badly misjudged Eisenhower, whose biographer Jean Edward Smith says that during the Potsdam Conference (July 17-Aug. 2, 1945), when Eisenhower was told of the Alamogordo test — his first knowledge of the new weapon — “he was appalled” and “was the only one at Potsdam who opposed using the bomb.” Smith says: “As president, Eisenhower would twice be presented with recommendations from his National Security Council and the Joint Chiefs of Staff that the bomb be used; first, in Vietnam to protect the French at Dien Bien Phu, then against China at the time of the Formosa Strait crisis. Both times Eisenhower rejected the recommendations. As a former supreme commander, Eisenhower had the confidence to do so, where other presidents might not have. And by rejecting the use of the bomb, there is no question that Eisenhower raised the threshold at which atomic weaponry could be employed — a legacy we continue to enjoy.”

But for how long? The non-proliferation regime has been remarkably successful. During the 1960 presidential campaign, John Kennedy cited “indications” that by 1964 there would be “10, 15 or 20” nuclear powers. As president, he said that by 1975 there might be 20. Now, however, North Korea, the ninth, might be joined by Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, among others, unless U.S. leadership produces, regarding North Korea, conspicuously credible deterrence. The reservoir of presidential credibility is not brimful.

On Aug. 1, Sen. Lindsey Graham said that Trump had told him that “there will be a war with North Korea” if it continues to develop ICBMs capable of reaching the United States. “We’ll see,” said Trump on Aug. 6, responding to this shouted question: “Will you attack North Korea?” *You?*

Are Congress’ constitutional powers regarding war so atrophied that it supinely hopes for mere post facto notification? Ten months after Nov. 8, that day’s costs, until now largely aesthetic, are suddenly, although not altogether unpredictably, more serious than were perhaps contemplated by his 62,984,825 voters.

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Japan should stick to its 3 non-nuclear principles

September 9, 2017

Editorial: Japan must stick to non-nuclear principles

<https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20170909/p2a/00m/0na/009000c>

Shigeru Ishiba, former secretary-general of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), called for discussions on a review of Japan's three non-nuclear principles of not possessing, not producing and not bringing in nuclear weapons.

- **【Related】** Japan should discuss deployment of US nukes inside country: Ishiba
- **【Related】** Komeito chief insists Japan stick to 3 non-nuclear principles, rejects nuke deployment

Specifically, Ishiba suggested that the third principle of not bringing in such weapons be re-evaluated to open the way for the deployment of U.S. nuclear weapons in Japan.

Debate on the deployment of U.S. nuclear arms could send the wrong message to China and other countries and adversely affect international cooperation in pressuring North Korea to abandon its nuclear weapons program.

Ishiba said, "Is it right to refuse the deployment of nuclear weapons inside the country while relying on U.S. nuclear arms for protection?"

Behind his remark is the idea that the deployment of nuclear arms in Japan, which would be exposed to a direct threat if North Korea possesses nuclear missiles, would enhance deterrence.

Ishiba pointed out that NATO has countered threats from the former Soviet Union and Russia by deploying U.S. nuclear weapons in its member countries, and said, "Such discussions are necessary to increase the usefulness of the nuclear umbrella." However, the security environment in East Asia is significantly different from that in Europe.

After China successfully conducted a nuclear test in 1964, there were discussions on the pros and cons of Japan arming itself with nuclear weapons. Nevertheless, then Prime Minister Eisaku Sato announced Japan's three non-nuclear principles in 1967, and the principles took root in Japan as an important part of its national policy in the process of the Ogasawara Islands south of Tokyo and Okinawa being returned to Japan's sovereignty from U.S. occupation in 1968 and 1972, respectively.

In adopting the principles, the government didn't just consider the Japanese public's sentiments as the only atomic-bombed country. Japan's calls for nuclear arms reduction and nuclear disarmament have been a pillar of Japan's diplomatic policy, and the denuclearization of East Asia, including the Korean Peninsula, is an important goal for Japan.

While falling under the protection of the U.S. nuclear umbrella, Japan has managed to maintain its goal of nuclear disarmament by adhering to its three non-nuclear principles.

It is necessary to re-examine Japan's diplomatic and security policies in the face of the growing threat posed by North Korea. That does not mean, however, that Japan can disregard the accumulation of historical and multifaceted discussions that led to the adoption of the non-nuclear principles as its national policy.

Fears persist in the international community that if North Korea were to possess nuclear missiles, Japan and South Korea would also arm themselves with nuclear weapons to deter the threat from Pyongyang.

It was appropriate that Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga promptly ruled out the possibility of Japan debating a review of the three non-nuclear principles, saying, "The government isn't considering deliberating the matter."

We fear Ishiba's remarks could undermine Japan's ultimate goal of realizing a world without nuclear arms.
September 8, 2017

EDITORIAL: Even in face of N. Korean threat, anti-nuke policy should remain

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201709080020.html>

With Japan facing the challenge of responding to North Korea's continuing nuclear arms program, former Defense Minister Shigeru Ishiba of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party has suggested a review of the nation's long-standing three non-nuclear principles.

Appearing in a TV Asahi program, Ishiba asked, "Is it a viable argument that we will not accept (nuclear weapons) in Japan while saying that the nation will be protected under the U.S. nuclear umbrella?"

The simple answer to his question is, "Yes, it is a viable argument."

The three principles of not producing or possessing nuclear weapons and not allowing their entry into Japan were first announced in 1967, during the Cold War, by then Prime Minister Eisaku Sato. Since then, the principles have been followed by Japan's successive Cabinets.

This is a key national creed of postwar Japan and a product of its desperate attempt to come to terms with the reality that it relies on the U.S. nuclear deterrence for its security despite its strong desire to help eliminate nuclear arms from the world, driven by its experiences as the only country that has ever suffered nuclear attacks.

The United States doesn't disclose, in principle, where it deploys its nuclear weapons. It is therefore difficult to confirm that the U.S. forces have not brought nuclear arms into Japan.

Even so, Japan's commitment to the three non-nuclear principles has been a pillar of the nation's foreign policy even after the end of the Cold War.

Japan's move to reconsider the principles could prompt South Korea and Taiwan to seek their own nuclear arsenals, triggering a nuclear domino effect.

In South Korea, there are already calls for the redeployment of U.S. tactical nuclear weapons to the country and even for its own nuclear armament.

The moves of South Korea and Taiwan to arm themselves with nuclear arsenals would seriously undermine the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty regime, giving North Korea a rationale for developing nuclear arms.

What is more important than anything else for the efforts to deal with North Korea's nuclear program is solidarity among Japan, the United States and South Korea. The three countries should act on their united front to seek cooperation from China and Russia, which have significant influence over Pyongyang.

Japan should contribute to this strategy by sending out a strong message about its resolve to seek the denuclearization of Northeast Asia including the Korean Peninsula.

Japan's solid commitment to the three non-nuclear principles will underpin its diplomatic efforts for this goal.

Made under these circumstances, Ishiba's remarks could cause diplomatic repercussions that can chip away at the foundation of Japan's diplomacy based on its non-nuclear principles. We cannot help but question his view on the issue.

As possible examples of allowing U.S. nuclear arms into Japan, Ishiba cited port calls made by U.S. strategic missile submarines carrying nuclear warheads at the U.S. Navy's Yokosuka base in Kanagawa Prefecture or the Sasebo base in Nagasaki Prefecture.

The port calls at bases in Japan, which are close to North Korea, however, would not make much strategic sense.

In addition, such actions by the U.S. forces could provoke backlashes from some neighboring countries and make Japan a target should war break out.

Ishiba's remarks came as part of a recent series of arguments made by LDP lawmakers for enhancing Japan's military power in response to North Korea's nuclear and missile provocations.

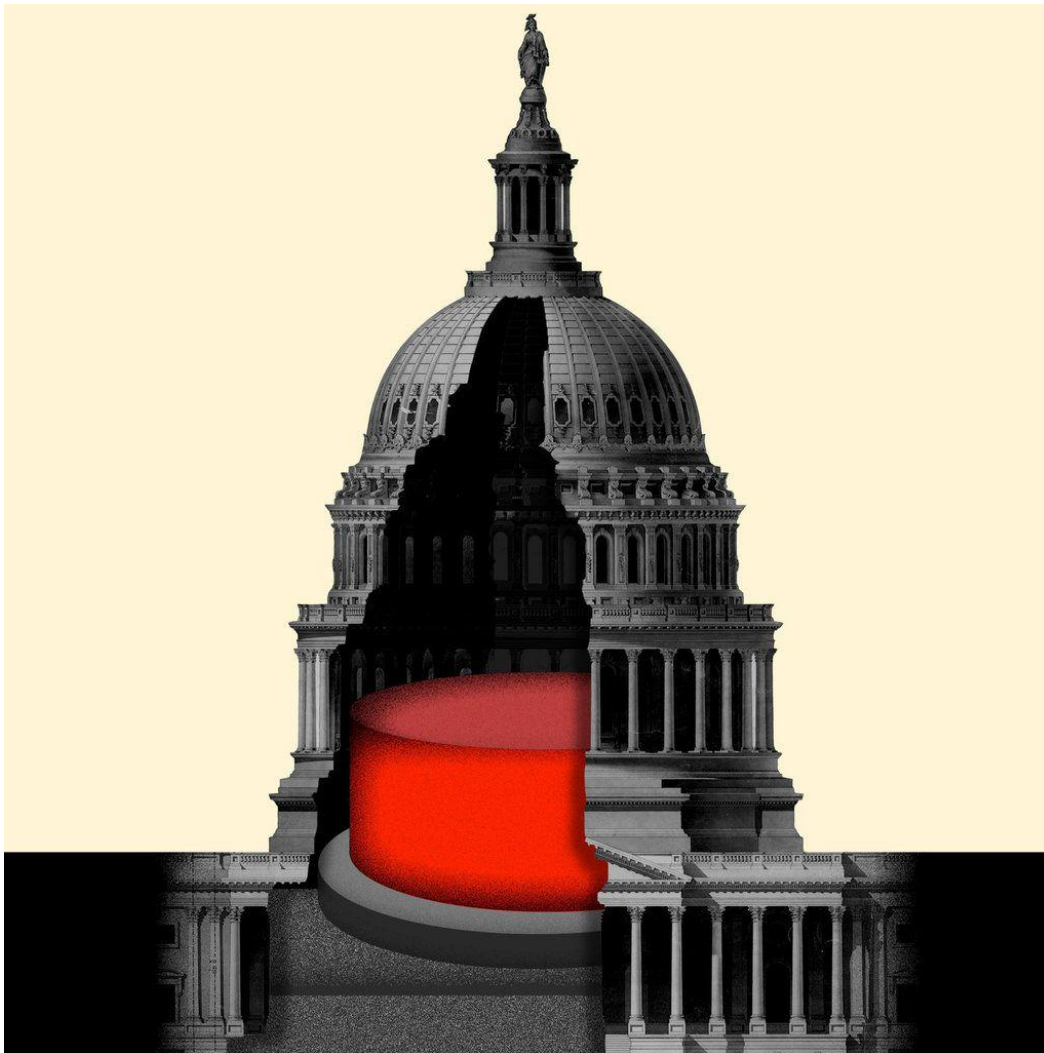
Katsuyuki Kawai, an LDP Lower House lawmaker who now serves as a special adviser to the LDP president, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, on foreign affairs, recently said, "I personally believe that the time

has already arrived to seriously consider the possibility of the Self-Defense Forces possessing intermediate-range ballistic missiles and cruise missiles.”

This kind of proposal, apparently designed to promote a hard-line security policy agenda by taking advantage of the current crisis, can never contribute to regional stability.

What is really needed is cool-headed debate that is firmly in line with Japan’s basic foreign policy tenets, including the three non-nuclear principles and the strictly defensive security policy.

"Should we live in a world where two leaders can stumble into a nuclear holocaust?"



September 12, 2017

Time to Restrict the President’s Power to Wage Nuclear War

https://www.nytimes.com/2017/09/12/opinion/time-to-restrict-the-presidents-power-to-wage-nuclear-war.html?emc=edit_th_20170912&nl=todaysheadlines&nid=32427321&r=0

By JEFFREY BADER and JONATHAN D. POLLACKSEPT. 12, 2017

For the first time in a generation, there is widespread anxiety about the possibility of nuclear war, stimulated by the extreme tensions between North Korea and the United States.

Secretary of State Rex Tillerson has advised Americans that they can sleep safely at night, a reassurance that most people probably wish they did not need to hear.

Mr. Tillerson offered his soothing counsel to deflate media hype about recent threats and counterthreats exchanged between Pyongyang and Washington. His words also reflect profound unease about the temperament and judgment of the two leaders who could trigger inadvertent war: President Trump and Kim Jong-un.

Mr. Trump and Mr. Kim appear to believe that bombast serves their domestic needs. Both seem to think that they can dominate and intimidate through the directness of threats. However, words can easily have consequences that neither leader seems to grasp.

Should we be living in a world where two leaders can stumble into a nuclear holocaust?

North Korea's accelerated pursuit of nuclear weapons clearly requires a much-enhanced containment and deterrence policy by the United States and its allies to prevent Mr. Kim from undertaking ever-riskier options. But what can be done to constrain the actions of an American president whose stability is now openly questioned, even by the Republican chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Bob Corker of Tennessee?

To limit the possibilities of an almost unimaginable conflict, there is a need to pursue a long overdue legislative remedy.

Under Article I of the Constitution, only Congress can declare war. Yet during America's numerous wars since World War II, presidents have never sought such authorization. The major reason? Nuclear weapons. There was widespread agreement that the president needed maximum flexibility to respond to a Soviet attack and that involving Congress would cause undue delays in a moment of crisis. As a result, the president has had essentially unchecked power to wage war, including launching a nuclear strike. However, strategic planners understood the risks of enabling a single officer in a silo in North Dakota, perhaps under the most stressful conditions imaginable, to initiate a nuclear strike. The nuclear command-and-control system therefore entailed a "two key" system requiring simultaneous actions by two officers to activate a launch.

The time is long overdue to introduce comparable checks at the highest levels of the executive branch. The strategic circumstances faced by the United States today are altogether different from those during the Cold War. Despite heightened tensions triggered by Russian revanchism in Ukraine and elsewhere in Central and Eastern Europe, the real risk of nuclear war emanates from a rogue actor, and North Korea heads the list. Almost casual presidential invocations of fire and fury have rendered circumstances far more dangerous.

The United States should in no way diminish its ability to respond to a nuclear or conventional attack by North Korea against United States territory or the territory of an ally.

However, we should put in place a system of constraints to ensure that a preventive or pre-emptive nuclear strike by the United States must be evaluated through a careful, deliberative process.

Congress should therefore amend the War Powers Act to cover the possibility of preventive or pre-emptive nuclear strikes. This would ensure that the president could not simply provide the codes to his military aide carrying the nuclear "football" and launch such an attack on his own authority.

Legislation should provide for a small group of officials, possibly including the vice president, the secretary of defense, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the four leaders of the House and Senate, to give unanimous consent to any such nuclear strike. It would ensure that multiple sets of eyes, equipped

with stable emotions and sound brains, would be able to prevent such a nuclear strike undertaken without appropriate deliberation.

This proposal would raise difficult constitutional questions. All presidential administrations have deemed the War Powers Act to be unconstitutional. Giving officers appointed by the president and subject to his direction formal veto power over military decisions could be problematic and precedent setting. If so, confining the veto power to the congressional leadership might be a preferable alternative.

Even during the Cold War, there was great risk in ceding to one person the ability to kill millions in a flash. There is no good reason to enable an American president to retain absolute authority in circumstances completely unlike those faced during the Cold War.

Assurances that nuclear weapons remain an option of absolute last resort, to be considered only after the concurrence of leaders from the executive branch and from the Congress, would also calm the nerves of United States allies deeply troubled by loose talk about the resort to nuclear weapons.

This is not to suggest that President Trump nurses some secret desire to launch a nuclear attack.

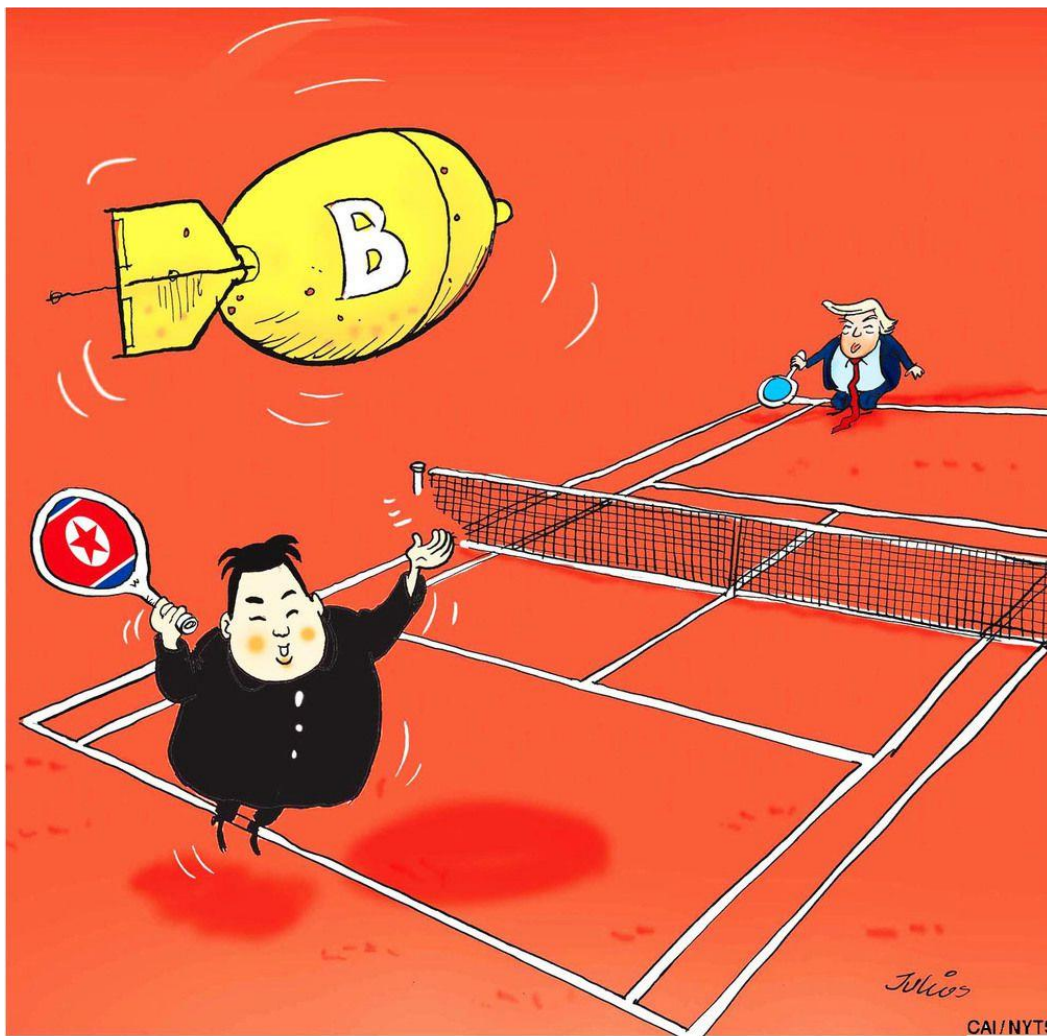
However, the United States needs to act very prudently in dealing with an isolated and uniquely adversarial state. For its part, Congress has the power to prevent hair-trigger responses or impulsive actions that could lead to nuclear war.

Jeffrey Bader was a senior adviser to President Barack Obama on Asia from 2009 to 2011. Jonathan D. Pollack is a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, specializing in Korea and China, and was a professor at the United States Naval War College.

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A version of this op-ed appears in print on September 12, 2017, on Page A27 of the New York edition with the headline: Stumbling Toward A Nuclear Holocaust. Today's Paper|Subscribe

What nuclear "crisis"?



US-Open!

September 14, 2017

North Korean nuclear 'crisis' an illusion

Kim and Trump are putting on a media puppet show for PR purposes

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2017/09/14/commentary/world-commentary/north-korean-nuclear-crisis-illusion/#.WbqTH8ZpGos>

by John Mecklin

Reuters

SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA – Although it has involved disturbing events — ballistic missile launches, nuclear weapons tests, military exercises, inane bombast — the North Korean “crisis” of recent months is largely an invented one.

A year ago, the probability that North Korea would fire a nuclear-tipped missile at the United States was essentially zero; the North did not have the capability to make such an attack. Pyongyang has made technological advances since then. But despite what some analysts believe, others say there is no definitive, publicly available proof that North Korea has a missile with the range to strike the continental

U.S., a miniaturized nuclear warhead to mate with it, and the shielding technology to make sure the warhead survives the heat and pressure of re-entry to the atmosphere.

That doesn't, of course, mean the show is harmless. But even if the North acquires those technical capabilities, the likelihood it might attack the U.S. with a nuclear missile will remain exceedingly low, for one overriding reason: North Korean leader Kim Jong Un is, as former Obama administration arms control director Jon Wolfsthal has explained in authoritative detail, neither crazy nor suicidal. The North Korean leader knows his regime would be erased within hours (more likely minutes) of his use of a nuclear weapon. Roughly 1,590 nuclear warheads deployed on U.S. ballistic missiles and bombers ensure that result. (The North has acquired the fissile material to build only 10 to 20 nuclear warheads, according to the most authoritative public reporting on the subject.)

It is also quite unlikely that the U.S. will make a pre-emptive military strike — conventional or nuclear — on North Korea, because doing so would almost certainly lead to hundreds of thousands of casualties in South Korea, and perhaps many more. Even without recourse to nuclear weapons, the North could fire thousands of rockets and artillery rounds in the early hours of a war, in a barrage of conventional explosives that would, as the North Korean state-run news service has threatened, turn Seoul into a “sea of fire.” Pyongyang also has huge stores of chemical artillery shells and rocket warheads and the capability, therefore, to also turn the South Korean capital into a sea of sarin and VX nerve gas.

In light of the undeniable reality of mutual deterrence, the North Korean “crisis” of 2017 can most accurately be seen as a media puppet show put on by Kim and U.S. President Donald Trump for their own public relations purposes. Nonetheless, it's a dangerous play. In the current overheated media environment, some piece of international theater by Kim or Trump — undertaken for political effect or negotiating edge or ego gratification — could become so magnified by breathless, 24/7 repetition on cable TV and the internet that it becomes seen as a humiliating national insult. An emotional response to that insult could initiate a spiral of escalation that leads to catastrophe. To put things in more concrete terms: If U.S. forces had shot down the North Korean missile recently fired through Japanese airspace, might Kim, in an act of pique or bravado, have fired another missile, perhaps in the general direction of Guam? Would Trump have then felt compelled to craft a macho response? Etcetera — with a possible end result of mushroom clouds.

The best way to reduce the threat of inadvertent war posed by the invented theatrical crisis in Northeast Asia would be to persuade the prime thespians — Kim and Trump — that the show they have been putting on is unbelievable and unlikely to get either what he wants. But I don't really expect that my views will motivate two world leaders of high (if largely unearned) self-regard to quickly change their policies on matters of life, death and television ratings.

So I propose a next-best approach: Journalists should stop writing and broadcasting about the North Korea situation as if everything had changed and war is very near. North Korea has been seeking a usable nuclear arsenal for years. Its latest underground nuclear test had a higher yield than earlier detonations, producing the explosive power of somewhat more than 100,000 tons of TNT, meaning it was four to five times the size of the bomb dropped on Nagasaki. The larger yield could have come from a fission bomb “boosted” with hydrogen isotopes or a true fusion weapon, commonly known as a hydrogen bomb; experts cannot be sure which, based on the information currently available.

But even if the Sept. 3 test involved a true hydrogen bomb, Sig Hecker — former director of Los Alamos National Laboratory and one of the country's foremost experts on North Korea's nuclear program — has told the magazine I edit, *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, that it wouldn't be “a game changer.” If delivered to an American city, any North Korean nuclear bomb — whether based on nuclear fission or fusion, whether its yield is 20 or 100 or 800 kilotons — would produce devastation and the instant death of tens

of thousands. That's a horrifying prospect. But again, North Korea's leaders know that to fire a nuclear weapon at the U.S. or its allies would constitute certain national suicide.

Clearly, North Korean nuclear bomb and ballistic missile tests are important events that the international news media must report. But the urgency that world news media are imparting to the "crisis" is, actually, a factor in extending it, thereby creating opportunities for miscalculation and war.

The North Korean situation might begin to devolve into the kind of long slog of difficult diplomacy that leads to an acceptable resolution if more journalists downplayed the Chairman Kim and President Trump Puppet Show and focused on reality: North Korea is a tiny, impoverished country that would be instantly vaporized if it ever launched a serious attack on the U.S., and so the probability of such an attack is vanishingly small. Absent a media environment that encourages a perception of crisis, the likelihood of an American pre-emptive attack is equally small.

Journalists can't make U.S. and North Korean leaders behave responsibly. But the media can help audiences understand that the Korean "crisis" is really a Korean standoff, and that a puppet show full of bluster is a rather pathetic substitute for professional diplomacy.

John Mecklin is a journalist, novelist and editor who specializes in narrative journalism. He is currently editor-in-chief of the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists.

Listen to their unbearable suffering

September 14, 2017

Eliminating the nuclear threat

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2017/09/14/national/eliminating-nuclear-threat/#.Wb4wJsZpGos>

There is a way to protect ourselves from nuclear weapons.

And that is to listen. Really listen.

Listen to the voices of the people who experienced their aftermath.

We will never muster the political will necessary to rid the world of nuclear weapons unless we understand what these ultimate instruments of violence really are.

We have banned landmines, cluster bombs and chemical weapons. Yet terrifying arsenals of nuclear weapons continue to exist, with nearly 2,000 on hair-trigger alert, the weapon of choice of the world's most powerful nations.

A recently published book, "Hiroshima and Nagasaki: That We Never Forget," brings together the voices and stories of more than 50 men and women who lived through the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945. So many personal stories — different perspectives on the same terrible event — create a real, complex and human picture.

And these people, known as hibakusha, are the ones who survived. The fate of those closer to the hypocenters was much worse.

We must not flinch from the reality of human suffering. If we do so, we may slip closer to repeating it, believing that these bombs are "just another weapon."

The very real threat of the use of nuclear weapons in Northeast Asia is completely unacceptable to anyone who understands their reality, especially when we know that today's nuclear weapons are hugely more destructive than those dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Unbearable suffering

So what is the real human impact described on these pages?

First are the intolerable levels of pain and suffering. The extreme heat obliterated people, melted eyeballs and caused skin to peel off, leaving suppurating burns that took months or years to heal. Masaki Morimoto, who experienced the bombing of Nagasaki when he was 12, recalled: "Maggots crawling around my wounds and bees coming to drink my pus — I was a living corpse. I was completely miserable." Extreme levels of radiation led to new depths of suffering. Senji Kawai, 15 when the bomb destroyed Hiroshima, stated: "I would run my fingers through my hair, and it would come out in clumps. ... My gums turned purple and started to rot. They bled easily, and pus would ooze out. When I brushed my teeth, pieces of jelly-like flesh would get caught in my toothbrush."

Almost all medical facilities had also been destroyed. People resorted to herbal remedies, simple antiseptic or even quack remedies such as ground human bone.

The people whose accounts are collected in this book all experienced the bombings as children or teenagers. Not only did they suffer physically, but they also missed the opportunity for education and often struggled in low-level jobs to make ends meet. They also suffered from persistent discrimination. Senji Kawai concluded: "I still hate the war for making me like this. ... I can't ignore my feelings because that bomb ruined my life. I have suffered continually from it all my life."

These depictions also include the mundane, a woman whose life was saved because she carried on peeling a potato and didn't rush outside to look at the planes, and another who returned home to sew on a button. Masaichi Egawa, Korean name Lee Jong-gun, was 17 when he experienced the Hiroshima bombing. He described how the human mind reacts in a tragedy of this unfathomable proportion: "The whole world was in darkness. ... As my sight gradually returned, I doubted my eyes. Whole buildings had completely disappeared. The scene was unbelievable. My next action was to look for my lunch box. When something beyond comprehension happens, human beings turn their attention to something ordinary."

He, like many, described terrible regrets, over failing to rescue someone trapped under a collapsed building as fire was spreading. "I just kept going, pretending I didn't hear her. Every time I recall this, I get angry at myself. ... This is an emotional conflict that will never be gone from my mind."

One woman related how sunsets still trigger memories of the red skies over Hiroshima as the city burned fiercely for three days and nights.

Common to all hibakusha is fear and anxiety throughout their lives regarding the impact of radiation. Reviewing "Hiroshima and Nagasaki: That We Never Forget," Masao Tomonaga, director emeritus of the Japanese Red Cross Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Hospital, commented: "The anxiety they still feel regarding potential aftereffects emerging in their own bodies or genetic effects in their offspring is quite beyond imagination. ... An instantaneous exposure in August 1945 has kept survivors imprisoned by aftereffects for 70 years."

Due to the stigma of being a hibakusha, many people hid the truth, not even telling their spouse that they had experienced the bombing. For women especially, this led to unbearable anxiety as the birth of a child neared, for fear of radiation-related disabilities.

An end to nuclear bombs

Every account concludes with the absolute determination to ensure that such hell is never experienced again. Shigeru Nonoyama puts it most succinctly: "Human beings do not need atomic bombs."

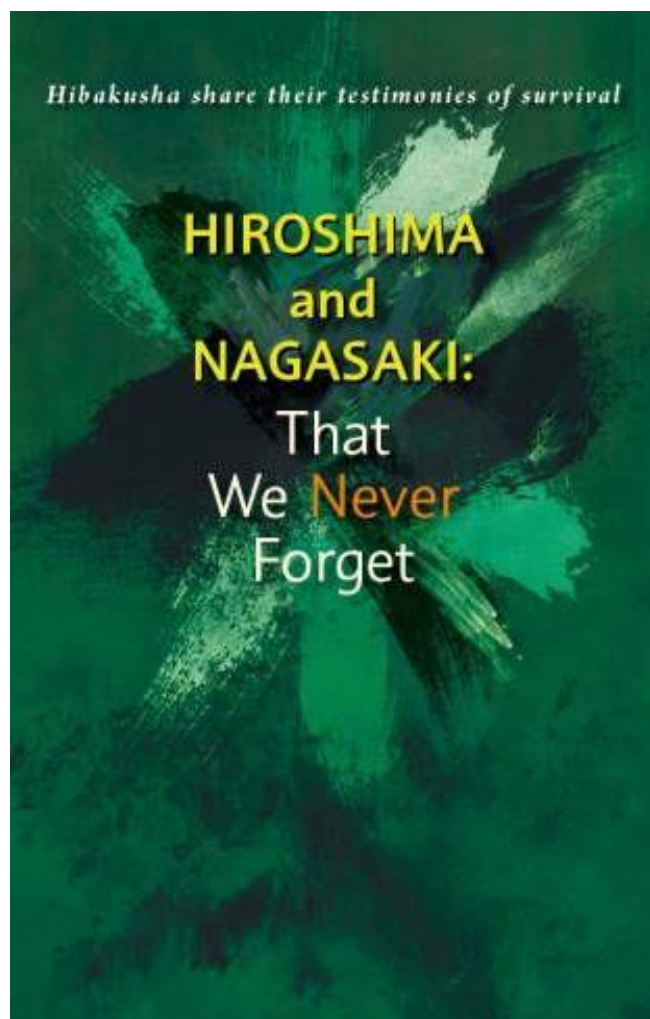
The voices of the survivors have grown increasingly important in the quest to ban nuclear weapons, even as they age and become fewer in number. During the negotiations toward the adoption by the U.N. of the landmark treaty on the prohibition of nuclear weapons in July this year, Setsuko Thurlow, now 85, and other hibakusha were key voices pushing the debate forward.

Overwhelmed with emotion, she welcomed the formal adoption of the treaty. She asked delegates to pause to honor those who perished in 1945 or died later from radiation-related illnesses. “Each person who died had a name. Each person was loved by someone,” she told the crowded conference room. “I’ve been waiting for this day for seven decades, and I am overjoyed that it has finally arrived. This is the beginning of the end of nuclear weapons.”

The treaty will be open for signing by governments from Sept. 20 during the U.N. General Assembly. Its preamble specifically references the suffering of the hibakusha. Now, more than ever, we must listen to their heartfelt plea for a world free from nuclear weapons.

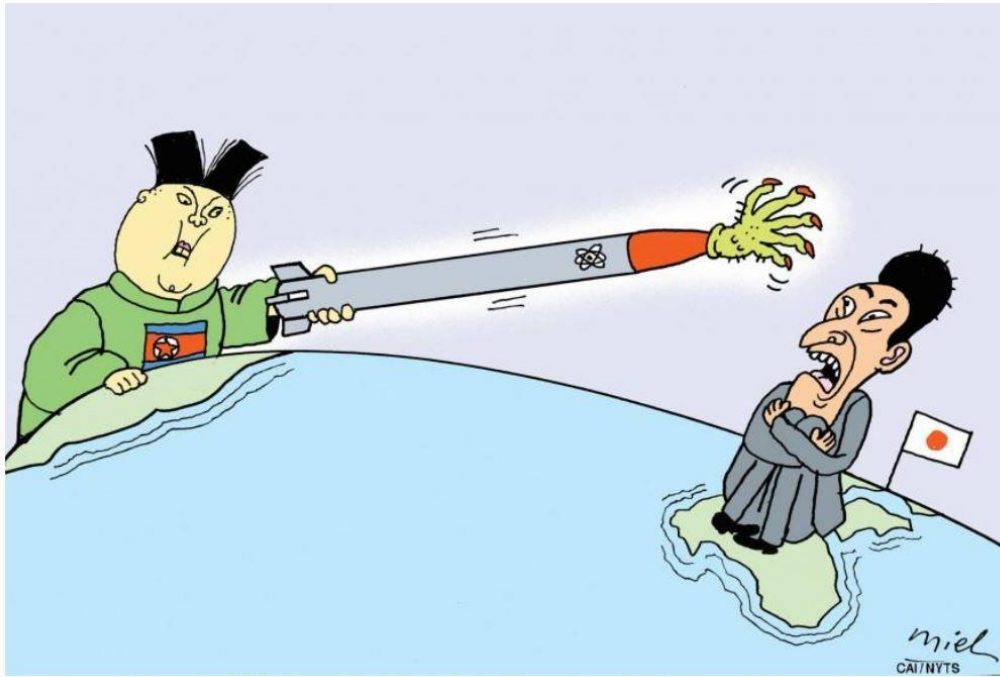
Kikue Shiota describes the tragic aftermath of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima. From a series of women’s testimonies

<https://youtu.be/VYsZTYfCAfc>



“Hiroshima and Nagasaki: That We Never Forget” is published by Daisanbunmeisha. It is available on [amazon.co.jp](https://www.amazon.co.jp), priced at ¥1,620 for the paperback and ¥464 for the Kindle version. The accounts it contains were gathered by members of the Soka Gakkai peace committees and compiled for this English language volume by the organization’s youth division. Soka Gakkai has been promoting the abolition of nuclear weapons for 60 years, since the Declaration Calling for the Abolition of Nuclear Weapons made by its second president Josei Toda on Sept. 8, 1957.

Nuclear sharing: A terrifying perspective



September 17, 2017

The time for 'nuclear sharing' with Japan is drawing near

Introducing U.S. nuclear weapons will be a necessary evil amid the current security turbulence

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2017/09/17/commentary/japan-commentary/time-nuclear-sharing-japan-drawing-near/#.Wb4xuMZpGos>

by Masahiro Matsumura

OSAKA – With North Korea's substantial nuclear arsenal and improved intercontinental ballistic missile capability, the world has no choice but to tolerate its illegitimate possession of nuclear weapons.

Pyongyang will never give up its nukes, which it considers essential for regime survival. Nor can they be eliminated without a massive pre-emptive attack that would invite catastrophic counterattacks against both South Korea and Japan.

The United Nations Security Council has just passed a resolution to impose additional, more stringent sanctions on North Korea. But these penalties fall short of a full oil embargo and other "super sanctions" that might immediately jeopardize the regime's survival and force Pyongyang to abandon its nuclear weapons. The country is believed to possess not only adequate oil reserves for one year but also limited oil refining capability.

China disapproves of super sanctions. But following the recent series of North Korean provocations, it has assented to additional, severer measures and it may enforce existing measures more stringently. China has long supplied most of the oil and grain needed by North Korea to maintain it as a strategic buffer vis-a-vis the United States and prevent the regime's collapse, which would entail a massive inflow of North Korean refugees. Besides, China itself now faces a significant nuclear threat from North Korea. After all,

the effective range of Pyongyang's newly operational nuclear missiles covers northern China, including the capital, Beijing.

Russia doesn't want to cooperate in imposing super-sanctions either. It has supplied substantial gasoline and jet fuel to North Korea, as if to offset China's reduction of these vital commodities in response to U.S. President Donald Trump's demands. Evidently, Russia has become Pyongyang's primary backer while striving to deal with the hostile U.S. establishment that has continued intense offensives centered on the Crimea annexation issue and the "Russiagate" interference in the U.S. presidential election last year. In fact, Russian President Vladimir Putin has made a series of statements against both military options and super sanctions vis-a-vis North Korea, instead suggesting that de facto nuclear arms control negotiations be pursued with the country.

Pyongyang will take advantage of this U.S.-China-Russia disunity and proceed with its drive to develop nuclear weapons. As a result, Japan will face an existential threat within the next year or two, especially after Pyongyang develops ICBMs that can attack the continental U.S. This means Japan will soon be unable to rely on U.S. extended nuclear deterrence due to significant doubts about Washington's commitment to nuclear retaliation.

Inadequate missile defense

At present, Japan's two-tier missile defense system is hardly adequate. It is designed as a simple theater missile defense that cannot provide a complete shield against North Korea's sizable number of nuclear missiles, particularly now due to the most recent technical leaps in performance. Nudged by the profit-seeking U.S. military-industrial complex, Japan is striving to acquire Aegis Ashore, a ground-based variant of the warship-based system, as a major supplement, but active defense will never solve the essential problem. Only the promise of punishment by nuclear retaliation can deter North Korea.

Thus, when the sense of crisis is heightened, Japan will most probably be driven to go nuclear, leading to self-reliance and strategic independence involving the abrogation of the alliance with the U.S., its sole security guarantor.

Alternatively, after suffering a nuclear attack, Japan would surely terminate the alliance, necessarily opting to be self-reliant and strategically independent by going nuclear. In either way, the U.S. will lose Japan, which is vital in maintaining its global military dominance in light of forward deployment, logistics and other crucial functions.

Japan follows an internally conflicted non-nuclear policy, while simultaneously facing a dilemma. Out of its unique historical experience of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the country is committed to nuclear disarmament while supporting the Non-Proliferation Treaty as a non-nuclear power. As a result, Japan has consistently taken the national policy of no possession, production or introduction of nuclear weapons.

Nonetheless, it relies on U.S. extended nuclear deterrence for national security.

Nuclear sharing

To prevent Japan from becoming a wild card, the U.S. should adopt a policy of "nuclear sharing" with Japan, emulating the concept as it is used in the NATO framework. Member countries without nuclear weapons of their own are included in the planning for the use of nuclear weapons by NATO, in particular providing for the armed forces of these countries to be involved in delivering the weapons in the event of their use.

The U.S. should plan together with Japan during peacetime the use of tactical nuclear weapons, and provide nuclear-armed Tomahawk cruise missiles for delivery by Japan's large fleet of conventional submarines in the event of their use. These missiles should be stored in a U.S. base in Japan during

peacetime. The U.S. should control them with a security device to prevent unauthorized arming and detonation.

Nuclear sharing would require Japan to introduce U.S. nuclear weapons on its soil, but enable the U.S. to avoid a direct challenge against Japan's non-nuclear policy by equipping U.S. forces in Japan with the weapons. This is a necessary evil given the current turbulence in the regional security environment. Japan would neither have to possess nor produce nuclear weapons, enabling continued observance of its obligations under the NPT. This approach would reinforce the political base of the pivotal bilateral alliance.

Masahiro Matsumura is a professor of international politics and national security at St. Andrew's University (Momoyama Gakuin Daigaku) in Osaka.

What "Japan" are we talking about?

September 20, 2017

Countries divided over nuclear ban treaty at UN

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20170920_23/

Statements by world leaders at the UN General Assembly have shown a deep divide over the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

The UN treaty was adopted in July with the support of 122 countries and territories. A signing ceremony for the treaty is scheduled on Wednesday at the UN Headquarters in New York. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres and leaders of more than 40 countries are expected to attend.

But, **opinions of nuclear powers and countries relying on their nuclear umbrella differ from those of non-nuclear states that support the treaty.**

On Tuesday, Costa Rican President Luis Guillermo Solis Rivera referred to the treaty in his speech. Costa Rica chaired the talks on the treaty.

He said the desire of the 122 countries that approved the text of the treaty is the legitimate voice of people who are lovers of peace and of the defense of humanity.

Austria's Foreign Minister Sebastian Kurz also expressed his expectation that the treaty will come into effect soon.

US President Donald Trump said the US will spend almost 700 billion dollars on military and defense, suggesting that the US will modernize its military arsenal including nuclear weapons.

Japan under the US nuclear umbrella has declined to attend the signing ceremony. Foreign Press Secretary

Norio Maruyama stressed Japan's position that nuclear disarmament should be promoted in phases. He said Japan does not believe the treaty is the most effective way to abolish nuclear weapons.

Pressure, patience... and deterrence ?



September 27, 2017

A strategy to eliminate North Korea's nuclear threat

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2017/09/27/commentary/japan-commentary/strategy-eliminate-north-koreas-nuclear-threat/#.Wcv7gMZpGot>

by James Zumwalt

WASHINGTON – North Korea took yet another reckless step in late August when it fired, without warning, an intermediate-range missile over Japan. The international community had only begun to mobilize its response when Pyongyang further stoked tensions this month by conducting its sixth and largest nuclear test, which caused a magnitude 6.1 earthquake, and firing another missile over Japan.

These hostile actions have increased the risk to peace and stability in the region and therefore demand a clear and firm response from the international community. But, at this time, we lack strong and effective near-term policy options. Economic and diplomatic pressure takes time, but any attempt to use military force to destroy North Korea's nuclear and missile programs in haste would lead to a catastrophic conflict. Some Japanese friends have expressed concern that the United States might eventually recognize North Korea as a nuclear power and negotiate limits on its program. Serious American observers of the problems posed by North Korea believe such an approach would be a serious mistake. As Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said at the United Nations last week, nations such as North Korea fail to appreciate the responsibilities inherent to possessing nuclear weapons. North Korea claims to want to develop nuclear weapons to ensure national security, he noted, but will use its new power to bully its neighbors. The fact remains that North Korea's nuclear program is inherently destabilizing, and the U.S. should continue to work closely with its allies to seek a nuclear-free Korean Peninsula through peaceful means.

Such close collaboration helped move the U.N. Security Council to respond to the recent provocations by tightening economic sanctions on North Korea. The focus must now shift to implementation of these sanctions, and it is critical that all parties do so. The U.S. and Japan should continue to use all diplomatic means to ensure that other parties — particularly China and Russia — adhere strictly to these U.N. sanctions. While we hope that these sanctions will decelerate the pace of North Korea's nuclear and missile programs, our main goal in implementing sanctions is to bring North Korea back to the negotiating table. Sanctions take time to bite, and North Korea is unlikely to feel compelled to begin serious talks soon. Therefore, this campaign of pressure through sanctions will require persistence and patience.

On a recent trip to Tokyo, I was asked whether we should use pressure or negotiate in our dealings with Pyongyang. But this is not a binary scenario. Sanctions alone will never achieve our objective of a nuclear-free peninsula. The purpose of sanctions is not to impose hardship on the North Korean people, but rather to force the regime in Pyongyang to consider alternatives to its relentless pursuit of nuclear weapons. Therefore, Japan and the U.S. and our friends in South Korea, even as we implement sanctions, should also begin to coordinate our future negotiation strategies in case sanctions succeed in bringing North Korea back to the table.

Implementing this long-term strategy of pressure and patience alone would be dangerous unless we simultaneously pursued a medium-term strategy to deter and contain North Korea. Let us not forget that the combined strength of allied forces on the Korean Peninsula has served as an effective deterrent for over 60 years. Recent North Korean actions have not changed the efficacy of our deterrence strategy. Americans appreciate that Japan, by providing rear support facilities to U.S. forces on the peninsula, plays a critical role in this deterrence effort. Americans hope that Japan and South Korea will make further efforts to strengthen their bilateral security relationship to reinforce the deterrence strategy we all share. The U.S. can help in this effort by hosting more frequent trilateral meetings and military exercises and by working with both of our Northeast Asian treaty allies to strengthen our missile defenses.

As we strengthen our deterrence against Pyongyang's reckless military actions, we must also coordinate efforts to contain North Korea. The country's nuclear program presents an increased proliferation risk.

Japan, the U.S., South Korea and others must work together to contain this proliferation threat so that North Korean nuclear technology does not come into the hands of other states or nonstate actors. We also must prepare for possible North Korean provocations such as cyberattacks or incidents at sea. Pressure and patience, deterrence and containment also will require clear and coordinated public messaging by all parties. The recent trilateral Japan-South Korea-U.S. summit in New York conveyed our shared resolve to the North Korean regime. Japan, South Korea and the U.S. must continue to remain in lock step with our public messaging to avoid any perception of alliance division or weakness. North Korea's escalation of tensions requires a multipronged strategy that includes both long-term and medium-term elements. Japan and the U.S. must increase and sustain economic pressure. At the same time, we must work together as allies in the medium term to deter and contain North Korea until we realize our ultimate vision of a nuclear-free Korean Peninsula.

James Zumwalt is the chief executive officer of Sasakawa Peace Foundation USA in Washington. He was the U.S. ambassador to Senegal and Guinea-Bissau from 2015 to January 2017. Previously, he was responsible for policy toward Japan and Korea as deputy assistant secretary in the Bureau of East Asia Affairs in the U.S. State Department.

Stanislav Petrov, the man who saved the world

September 22, 2017

Stanislav Petrov: the Ignominious End of the Man Who Saved the World

<https://www.counterpunch.org/2017/09/22/stanislav-petrov-the-ignominious-end-of-the-man-who-saved-the-world/>

by Linda Pentz Gunter

I just returned from the Nuclear-Free Future Awards in Basel, Switzerland, which this year were held in conjunction with a conference on *Human Rights, Future Generations & Crimes In The Nuclear Age*. The conference was hosted by IPPNW Switzerland. International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War won the Nobel peace prize in 1985.

Fortunately, we can still envisage a nuclear-free future. In Basel, we honored individuals who have devoted their lives to ensuring that vision. Next year will be the 20th anniversary of the Award. Let's hope we can still talk then about a future that is nuclear-free.

The signing this week of the UN global nuclear weapons ban treaty is a hopeful step in the right direction. Although ignored by the nuclear weapons states, it brings the issue back to the international spotlight, introducing an unprecedented stigmatization of nuclear weapons within an international legal framework. It's not perfect, but a necessary first step.

Ironically, the day I returned from Basel, the news broke of the death of Stanislav Petrov. **He had died on May 19, but we were only hearing about it now because it was never reported.** A German documentarian had phoned to deliver birthday greetings to Petrov and had instead received the news of his passing from Petrov's son, Dimitry.

Without Petrov, we would have had no nuclear-free future and likely no future at all. He is possibly the single most entitled winner of the Nuclear-Free Future Award, although sadly it was never extended to him. Perhaps it can be offered posthumously. This would be a break with tradition, but it is worth giving pause to his contribution.

Petrov was the lieutenant colonel in the Soviet Union's Air Defense Forces who, on the night of September 26, 1983 just happened to be in charge of monitoring his country's satellite system that watched for a potential launch of nuclear weapons by the United States. In the early hours, such a launch appeared to have happened.

Petrov had only minutes to decide if the launch was genuine. He was supposed to report the alert up the chain of command. Doing so would almost certainly have led to a counterstrike, triggering a full-on nuclear exchange between the Soviet Union and the U.S. Instead, Petrov hesitated. And doubted.

The alarm suggested five missiles, too few for an all-out nuclear attack by the U.S. But time was of the essence. If Petrov's doubts were misplaced and this was a real attack, his duty was to inform his superiors so a retaliatory strike could be launched.

But Petrov never made that call. Instead, he decided to check if there was a computer malfunction. This was later discovered to have been the case. A satellite had mistaken the sun's reflection off the tops of clouds for a missile launch. The computer system had failed to make the distinction as well.

His decision came on the heels of the shooting down of a commercial Korean airliner by the Soviet Union earlier that year. **Petrov's act of catching a mistake before catastrophe was instead viewed by Soviet officialdom as yet another embarrassment.**

Consequently, Petrov went unheralded in his country. Worse, he was reprimanded for mistakes in his logbook and lived largely in ignominy until his death. Even then, there was no official announcement.

Because the Petrov event was classified for so long, it was the 1995 Norwegian rocket incident that gained wider attention, another close call that could have ended in our obliteration. The Norwegian-American rocket was launched to study the aurora borealis but was initially mistaken by Russian nuclear forces as a hostile nuclear launch, resulting in then Russian president, Boris Yeltsin, not known for his sobriety, opening and activating the Russian nuclear weapons command suitcase.

Yeltsin had just minutes to decide if the rocket was a high-altitude nuclear attack and launch a retaliatory nuclear strike. Fortunately, the rocket changed course, making it clear that Russia was not being targeted. Later in life, after the fall of the Soviet Union, Petrov was finally heralded for his life-saving inaction, although by all accounts he was a highly modest man who did not necessarily welcome such accolades and attention.

In 2006 he received an award at the United Nations from the Association of World Citizens for "the part he played in averting a catastrophe."

In 2013 he was awarded the Dresden Peace Prize. A 2014 Danish docudrama called Petrov "the man who saved the world." When interviewed for the film, he said, "I am not a hero. I was just in the right place at the right time."

Next Tuesday will mark the fourth year of the UN's Nuclear Abolition Day, a not uncoincidental choice of date.

Stanislav Petrov asked for nothing. Nevertheless, we owe him everything.

Human Rights, Future Generations and Crimes in the Nuclear Age (Basel, Sept. 2017)

Basel Declaration on human rights and trans-generational crimes resulting from nuclear weapons and nuclear energy

The participants in the international conference *Human Rights, Future Generations and Crimes in the Nuclear Age*, held in Basel from September 14-17, 2017, affirm that the risks and impacts of nuclear weapons, depleted uranium weapons and nuclear energy, which are both transnational and trans-generational, constitute a violation of human rights, a transgression of international humanitarian and environmental law, and a crime against future generations.

We are convinced that the energy needs of all countries can be met by safe, sustainable, renewable energies, and that the security of all countries can be met without reliance on nuclear weapons. Our conclusions are based on the following;

On Uranium mining

- Uranium mining and enrichment, which provide the fuel for nuclear energy, release long-lasting and highly toxic radionuclides into the environment causing severe impact on the health of current and future generations exposed to the radiation;
- The nuclear fuel chain, especially uranium enrichment and plutonium reprocessing, provide possibilities for countries with these technologies to also produce nuclear weapons, creating additional threats to current and future generations.
- Finally, the financial prospects of uranium mining in the intermediate and long term future seem questionable at best, considering the existing downtrend in utilization of nuclear energy. Subsequently Governments may seriously consider ceasing the exploration of uranium.

On nuclear energy

- Along the chain of production, regular use and waste management of nuclear fuel for energy generation as well as after nuclear power plant accidents huge amounts of radioactive isotopes are released into the biosphere. Severe health effects as cancer and non-cancer diseases have been demonstrated in populations exposed. In particular resulting genetic changes impact on the health of current and future generations. Modern studies on low dose ionizing radiation (LDIR) corroborate the Linear No Threshold [LNT] concept. Scientifically based understanding calls for acceptance of risk estimations at doses as low as 1 mSv. ICRP-recommendations must be revised as they are outdated one decade after their effective date.
- Many nuclear power plants, particularly in Europe, are located in regions of high population density;
- Any nuclear disaster has cross border effects affecting population of several countries, and would be an infringement of international law requiring states to ensure that activities within their jurisdiction or control do not cause damage to the environment of other states.
- The 2015 Sendai United Nations declaration recognized that accountability for disaster risk creation is needed at all levels. Furthermore, all human rights need to be promoted and protected in any disaster situation, including man made hazards and technological risks;
- The exorbitantly high costs of nuclear energy production and management (including waste storage) make it an inappropriate investment as compared to renewable energies;

- Nuclear disasters like those at Mayak, Three Mile Island, Sellafield, Chernobyl and Fukushima, release massive quantities of radionuclides into the environment impacting on the health of current and future generations;
- Nuclear power plants, in operation and after their dismantlement, generate huge amounts of radioactive waste, which is dangerous for thousands of years, even longer than any known civilization has lasted. The question of safe long-term storage of radioactive waste over centuries has not been answered so far.

On nuclear weapons

- The use and testing of nuclear weapons has generated severe, trans-generational damage to health and the environment of those in the vicinity of the detonations and also to humanity as a whole;
- Recent research, highlighted by the series of international conferences on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons, indicates that any use of nuclear weapons on a populated area would cause disastrous humanitarian and environmental consequences, and any multiple use of nuclear weapons would cause catastrophic and irreversible damage to the climate in addition to the radiation and blast impacts;
- We affirm that nuclear deterrence is immoral, illegal and of doubtful value for security. The high risks of nuclear weapons being used in current conflicts such as in North East Asia, in other times of tension, and until nuclear weapons are eliminated provides an imperative for nuclear abolition.
- The financial and human investments in the nuclear arms race are deviating required resources from human, social and environmental needs. This includes promoting education, providing basic universal health care, protecting the climate and implementing the sustainable development goals.

On depleted uranium (DU) weapons

- Epidemiological reports indicate that exposure to depleted uranium has health impacts on those exposed and their offspring;
- Use of uranium for armor plating and piercing projectiles release depleted uranium into the environment, where it will be deposited for thousands of years, causing risks to combatants and non-combatants alike.

On international law applicable to nuclear weapons and energy

In addition to general international law, the following branches, *inter alia*, are applicable to nuclear weapons and nuclear energy:

- *International human rights law* protects, in particular, the right to life, the right not to be subject to inhuman or degrading treatment, the right to the highest standard of health and to a healthy environment, the right to an adequate standard of living, including the right to food and water, as well as the freedom of expression and the right to seek and receive information. Moreover, special instruments for particularly vulnerable groups, such as women, children, indigenous peoples or persons with disabilities, have been adopted and concluded.
- *International humanitarian law*: This body of law prohibits the use of weapons or methods of warfare that would indiscriminately impact on civilians, cause unnecessary suffering to

combatants, violate neutral territories, be dis-proportionate to the provocation or cause severe, long-term or irreversible damage to the environment.

- *The law of peace and security*: This body of law, expressed primarily through the UN Charter, prohibits the threat or use of force except in legitimate self defence.
- *Law protecting the environment and future generations*: This body of law, expressed in a number of international treaties, provides a responsibility to ensure a sustainable environment for current and future generations, and to prohibit activities which are known to seriously threaten this. There is also a legal responsibility to prevent and protect the public from exposure to harm, when scientific investigation has found a plausible risk.

The production of nuclear energy violates human rights law and international law protecting the environment and future generations due to the impacts of nuclear energy on human health and the environment as outlined above.

The production, threat and use of nuclear weapons violate all four bodies of law outlined above. As such, we agree with the conclusion of the International Court of Justice that '*the destructive impact of nuclear weapons cannot be contained in time or space*' and with the affirmation of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons that '*any use of nuclear weapons would be contrary to the rules of international law applicable in armed conflict, and in particular the principles and rules of international humanitarian law.*' More-over, it would constitute an ecocide.

On rights and responsibilities under the law

- We call for full redress for all people whose health, well-being or livelihoods have been negatively impacted by uranium mining, nuclear energy and nuclear weapons;
- We welcome the provision in the *Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons* on victim assistance and environmental remediation and call for its full implementation;
- We appeal to all those in the nuclear weapons and energy industries and administering government departments to recognize the illegality of the production of nuclear weapons and energy, and to cease such activities;
- We welcome the conclusions of the *International Peoples' Tribunal on Nuclear Weapons and the Destruction of Human Civilisation*, held on July 7-9, 2016, that convicted (in absentia) the leaders of the nuclear-armed States (and one of the allied States as a test case) for war crimes, crimes against humanity, crimes against peace, crimes against future generations and crimes of threatening, planning and preparing acts which would constitute ecocide, which is understood as causing serious damage to, or destruction, of an ecosystem or ecosystems, or of causing serious, long-term or irreversible damage to the global commons.
- We welcome the fact that the majority of countries neither produce nuclear energy nor possess nuclear weapons, and we call on all other countries to join them.
- We welcome the establishment of the International Renewable Energy Agency, which provides assistance to countries to develop renewable energies, and we highlight it's 2016 Report *REthinking Energy: Renewable Energy and Climate Change which demonstrates the possibilities to completely replace fossil fuels by safe renewable energies, without relying on nuclear energy, by 2030*.
- We commend the 184 countries who have joined the *Non-Proliferation Treaty* as non-nuclear States and the 122 countries who voted in favour of the *Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons* which also prohibits the threat or use of nuclear weapons. We call on all countries to

agree to the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons and to adopt, at the 2018 UN High Level Conference on Disarmament, a framework to implement this.

- We call on all countries utilizing nuclear energy to announce a program for phasing out their use of nuclear energy and replacing it with renewable energy sources.
- Finally, as doctors, lawyers, scientists and nuclear experts from 27 countries we consider it as our moral duty to highlight the facts regarding nuclear energy and weapons, and promote a safe, sustainable and peaceful future for humanity and our planet consistent with human rights and the rights of future generations.

As such we make the following proposals:

We support the initiatives that Switzerland has taken to phase out nuclear energy domestically and to prohibit nuclear weapons globally, and we encourage Switzerland to take further efforts at the United Nations to prohibit all aspects of the nuclear energy and weapons industries.

2. The Linear No Threshold [LNT] concept and collective dose-calculations allow extrapolations of health risks in large populations exposed to low doses of ionizing radiation. Current scientifically based understanding calls for acceptance of risk estimations at doses as low as 1 mSv and therefore asks for a revision of the ICRP-recommendations, which are outdated one decade after their effective date.

3. Violations of human rights by ionizing radiation sources must be documented epidemiologically. In this regard medical standards for compensation of victims have to be established. Companies / people found to violate the rights of the concerned workers must be held responsible by national and international courts. Everyone has the right to seek and receive information. Victims must be compensated.

4. The employment of nuclear weapons, as well as indiscriminate damage to health and to the environment resulting from other nuclear activities, should be included as a crime against humanity under the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. We also call for amendment of the Rome Statute to include the crime of ecocide.

5. Young people and students need to be alerted to the relation between « Nuclear energy / nuclear weapons – Violations of human rights – Rights of future generations. Their human rights are endangered and therefore they need to become active and encouraged to have their current and future interests respected. Law and medical faculties are encouraged to consider teaching on human rights in their corresponding curricula, in general but also in the mentioned context of the 'Nuclear fuel chain', and this also in view of the rights of future generations.

6. The 28 May 1959 agreement between the World Health organization and the IAEA, which leads to conflict of interest and limits the free information on health consequences of nuclear civil use, must be abolished

7. The participants of the Symposium 'Human Rights, Future Generations and Crimes in the Nuclear Age' are ready to share these demands and communicate them to decision makers in other countries.

Contacts:

Conference website: www.events-swiss-ippnw.org

Association of Swiss Lawyers for Nuclear Disarmament: <https://safna.org>

Basel Peace Office: www.baselpeaceoffice.org

International Center for Comparative Environmental Law: www.cidce.org

PSR/IPPNW Schweiz: www.ippnw.ch

Uranium Network: www.uranium-network.org

ICAN wins Nobel Peace Prize!

October 6, 2017

Anti-nuclear campaign group wins 2017 Nobel Peace Prize

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-nobel-prize-peace/anti-nuclear-campaign-group-wins-2017-nobel-peace-prize-idUSKBN1CB0XR>

Nerijus Adomaitis, Tom Miles - October 6, 2017

OSLO/GENEVA (Reuters) - The Norwegian Nobel Committee, warning of a rising risk of nuclear war and the spread of weapons to North Korea, awarded the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize on Friday to a little-known campaign group seeking a global ban on nuclear arms.

The award for the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) was unexpected, particularly in a year when the architects of the 2015 nuclear deal between international powers and Iran had been seen as favorites for achieving the sort of diplomatic breakthrough that has won the prize in the past.

Still, supporters saw it as a potential breakthrough for a global movement that has fought to ban nuclear arms from the day the first atomic bomb was dropped on the Japanese city of Hiroshima in August 1945.

ICAN's Executive Director Beatrice Fihn told Reuters the group was elated.

Asked if she had a message for North Korea's Kim Jong-Un, who has tested nuclear arms in defiance of global pressure, and President Donald Trump, who has threatened to "totally destroy" North Korea to protect the United States and its allies, she said both leaders need to know that the weapons are illegal. (Graphics of 'Nobel Laureates' - [here](#))

“Nuclear weapons are illegal. Threatening to use nuclear weapons is illegal. Having nuclear weapons, possessing nuclear weapons, developing nuclear weapons, is illegal, and they need to stop.”

Two days before her group won the prize, Fihn tweeted that Trump was “a moron”. She told Reuters she had written this in the context of news reports at the time that U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson had used the same word to describe his boss. But she said Trump’s impulsive character illustrated the importance of banning nuclear arms for all countries.

“A man you can bait with a tweet seems to be taking irrational decisions very quickly and not listening to expertise, it just puts a spotlight on what do nuclear weapons really mean. There are no right hands for the wrong weapons,” she said.

ICAN describes itself as a coalition of grassroots non-government groups in more than 100 nations. It began in Australia and was officially launched in Vienna in 2007.

“We live in a world where the risk of nuclear weapons being used is greater than it has been for a long time,” said Berit Reiss-Andersen, the leader of the Norwegian Nobel Committee.

“Some states are modernizing their nuclear arsenals, and there is a real danger that more countries will try to procure nuclear weapons, as exemplified by North Korea.”

The award was hailed by anti-nuclear campaigners around the world. Mikiso Iwasa, an 88-year-old Hiroshima survivor, told Reuters the prize would help push the movement forward.

“It is wonderful we have this Nobel Peace-Prize winning movement. All of us need to join forces, think hard and walk forward together to turn this momentum into something even bigger,” he said.

NUCLEAR TENSIONS

The prize seeks to bolster the case of disarmament amid nuclear tensions between Washington and Pyongyang, as well as uncertainty over the fate of the 2015 deal between Iran and major powers to limit Tehran’s nuclear program, although the committee made no mention of Iran in its award citation.

The committee raised eyebrows with its decision to award the prize to an international campaign group with a relatively low profile, rather than recognizing the Iran deal, a complex agreement hammered out over years of high-stakes diplomacy.

“Norwegian Nobel Committee has its own ways, but the nuclear agreement with Iran achieved something real and would have deserved a prize,” tweeted Carl Bildt, a former Swedish prime minister who has held top posts as an international diplomat.

The Iran accord, which Trump has repeatedly called “the worst deal ever negotiated”, is seen as under particular threat this week. A senior administration official said on Thursday Trump is expected to decertify Iran’s compliance, a step toward potentially unwinding the pact.

The committee may have been reluctant to reward the Iranian government for its role in the nuclear deal because the only Iranian winner so far, 2003 laureate Shrin Ebadi, a lawyer and human rights campaigner, is forced to live in exile.

"I think the committee has thought about the human rights situation in Iran. It would have been difficult to explain the prize even though it has a favorable view of the Iran deal," Asle Sveen, a historian of the Nobel Peace Prize, told Reuters.

The Norwegian Nobel committee denied that giving the prize to an anti-nuclear group was intended either as a rebuke to Trump, or as a snub to the architects of the Iran nuclear deal.

"The Iran treaty is a positive development, a disarmament development that is positive, but the reason we mentioned North Korea (in our statement) is a reference to the threat that people actually feel," Reiss-Andersen told Reuters.

"Iran has not voiced recent threats to use nuclear weapons, on the contrary," she said in an interview.

ICAN has campaigned for a U.N. Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which was adopted by 122 nations in July this year.

That agreement is not signed by -- and would not apply to -- any of the states that already have nuclear arms, which include the five U.N. Security Council permanent members, the United States, Russia, China, Britain and France, as well as India, Pakistan and North Korea. Israel is also widely assumed to have nuclear weapons, although it neither confirms nor denies it.

Major allies of the declared nuclear powers also oppose the new treaty. Nevertheless, campaigners see it as a framework that would make it easier for countries that have nuclear arms to work toward eliminating them.

The United Nations said the award would help bolster efforts to get enough of the countries that signed the new treaty to ratify it so that it can come into force. Fifty ratifications are needed.

"I hope this prize will be conducive for the entry into force of this treaty," U.N. Chief Spokeswoman in Geneva Alessandra Vellucci told a news briefing.

Additional reporting by Joachim Dagenborg, Terje Solsvik, Henrik Stolen, Gwladys Fouche and Alister Doyle in Oslo, Stephanie Nebehay in Geneva, Kiyoshi Takenaka in Tokyo, writing by Gwladys Fouche and Alister Doyle, editing by Peter Graff

Nobel Peace Prize: Could it affect Gov't s stance on ban treaty?

October 7, 2017

Japan perplexed over decision to award Peace Prize to ICAN

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201710070027.html>

The Japanese government was clearly caught off-guard by the decision to award this year's Nobel Peace Prize to the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN).

Despite Japan's decades-long campaign against nuclear weapons, the government found itself in a bind as it relies on the U.S. nuclear umbrella for its security and is, like the nuclear powers, not a party to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons adopted in July, for which ICAN is being honored.

Tokyo did not even release an official statement to mark the occasion, although some members of the government welcomed the Oct. 6 announcement by the Norwegian Nobel Committee.

ICAN, an international nongovernmental organization headquartered in Geneva, won the award for its decade-long push for the treaty to take effect.

One high-ranking Foreign Ministry official tried to explain the official quandary in terms of the perceived threat to Japan from North Korea's nuclear and missile development programs.

"The standpoints are different between countries (that are far from North Korea) and us, which is facing an actual threat."

However, Fumio Kishida, who served as foreign minister when the treaty was adopted, told The Asahi Shimbun on Oct. 6: "People who are making efforts toward the abolition of nuclear weapons won the peace prize. We should welcome it."

And yet, Kishida, now chairman of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party's Policy Research Council, explained the government's stance not to be a party to the treaty.

"The global community is divided between the nuclear powers and countries that do not have nuclear weapons. Japan should play the role of connecting them," he said.

Current Foreign Minister Taro Kono posted a tweet on the issue, but avoided evaluating ICAN's achievement.

"In the same way as before, we will continue to work for nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation along with the nuclear powers," his post read.

With regard to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, the Japanese government has said: "The purpose, which is the abolition of nuclear weapons, is the same. But how to approach that goal is different."

It has noted that a sharp divide has emerged over the treaty, given that the nuclear powers refuse to be a party to it.

In September, more than 50 countries signed the treaty. It will probably come into force as early as 2018 after those countries ratify it.

The Japanese government, however, is not expected to change its position.

Kazuo Shii, chairman of the Japanese Communist Party, was quick to fire a broadside at the Abe administration Oct. 6 over its stance on the treaty.

"ICAN has been working with ordinary citizens, including atomic bomb survivors from Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and received a strong endorsement for its work. We believe this is a good opportunity for the Japanese government to sign the treaty," Shii said.

Terumi Tanaka, 85, a leading member of the Japan Confederation of A- and H-Bomb Sufferers Organizations, also took issue with the Japanese government's stance, saying it goes against growing calls to abolish nuclear weapons.

"We will urge the government more strongly to sign the treaty," he said.

Akira Kawasaki, 48, a co-representative of Peace Boat, a Japanese NGO working to raise awareness for peace and human rights, among other issues, said that the decision to award ICAN the Nobel prize is "also for atomic bomb survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and those who suffered in nuclear tests around the world who had the courage to stand up and speak out."

Noting that Japan is the only country to have experienced atomic warfare, he voiced incredulity that Japan still refuses to sign the treaty.

"The decision (honoring ICAN) is clearly aimed at getting Japan to review its position," said Kawasaki, who serves as a member of ICAN's International Steering Group.

Peace Prize

October 7, 2017

Editorial: Nobel Peace Prize win for anti-nuke NGO reflects international opinion

<https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20171007/p2a/00m/0na/004000c>

The International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), an NGO which played a key role in creating the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, has won the Nobel Peace Prize.

- **【Related】** Nobel Peace Prize is also for 'hibakusha': ICAN chief
- **【Related】** Nobel Peace Prize awarded to anti-nuclear campaign group

By awarding the prize to the NGO, the Nobel committee has sent a clear message to the world that it supports efforts to achieve the ideal of a world without nuclear weapons. **It is notable that efforts toward international cooperation at the grass-roots level have been appreciated.**

NGOs from various countries pursuing nuclear disarmament founded ICAN in 2007. It currently consists of more than 400 groups from about 100 countries. Akira Kawasaki, co-leader of the Japanese NGO Peace Boat, is a member of ICAN's International Steering Group. The international NGO has also cooperated with the Japan Confederation of A- and H-Bomb Sufferers Organizations.

ICAN commented that **the prize is also for hibakusha**, or survivors of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Therefore, the Nobel committee has also appreciated hibakushas' efforts to raise the international community's awareness of the tragedy of using atomic arms.

Awarding the Nobel Peace Prize to ICAN also sounded an alarm bell over the current international situation, which is becoming increasingly tense because of North Korea's development of nuclear weapons. The Nobel committee specifically mentioned North Korea and pointed out that the proliferation of nuclear weapons poses a serious threat to the world.

ICAN chief Beatrice Fihn sent a message to the feuding U.S. President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, saying, "Nuclear weapons are illegal. Threatening to use nuclear weapons is illegal. Having nuclear weapons, possessing nuclear weapons, developing nuclear weapons, is illegal, and they (the leaders) need to stop."

ICAN's activities moved Austria and many other non-nuclear powers, leading to the adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons by 122 countries this past July. The latest decision by the Nobel committee apparently reflects rising international calls for nuclear disarmament.

The decision can also be interpreted as **a warning over the lack of progress in nuclear arms reductions**. Nuclear powers, including the United States, Russia and China, have refused to sign the treaty. The Nobel committee urged the international community to step up efforts toward nuclear disarmament, pointing out that how to get nuclear powers involved in such efforts is a major challenge.

Japan, as well as South Korea, Australia and European countries, refused to participate in Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons negotiations. Japan remained aloof on the grounds that if it were to sign the treaty, it would be inconsistent with Japan's policy of relying on the U.S. nuclear umbrella for the country's security.

Since Japan is the only atomic-bombed country, we should welcome the decision to award the Nobel Peace Prize to ICAN. All the more for that, it is extremely regrettable that Japan has not signed the nuclear weapons ban treaty.

October 9, 2017

Nobel Prize for hibakusha too

October 9, 2017

ICAN member congratulates hibakusha over Nobel Peace Prize at Tokyo meeting

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2017/10/09/national/key-ican-member-congratulates-hibakusha-nobel-peace-prize-tokyo-meeting/#.WdyQGDtpGot>

Kyodo

A key Japanese member of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) on Monday congratulated the survivors of the 1945 atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki for the Nobel Peace Prize awarded to the Geneva-based organization.

“It is an award for everyone who has worked to eradicate nuclear arms,” Akira Kawasaki, an ICAN International Steering Group member and a co-chair of the Japanese nongovernmental organization Peace Boat, told a group of 20 atomic bomb survivors, also known as hibakusha, at a meeting in Tokyo.

ICAN won this year’s Nobel Peace Prize for its efforts that led to the adoption in July of a landmark U.N. treaty outlawing nuclear weapons. In its campaign, ICAN worked with hibakusha.

Peace Boat, one of ICAN’s main member organizations, has been sailing around the world with hibakusha to tell their experiences to politicians and students worldwide.

When the Norwegian Nobel Committee announced the prize on Friday, Kawasaki was flying to Iceland via the United States to be present at an event to share stories of atomic bomb survivors.

At Monday’s meeting, Kawasaki told around 100 participants, including hibakusha in their 80s, about the background of the establishment of ICAN and international affairs in the lead-up to the treaty’s adoption in July.

“Hibakusha’s hard work in telling their stories have been at the root of the attempt to convey the inhumanity of nuclear arms,” he said.

Michiko Hattori, an 88-year-old survivor who has shared her stories abroad, expressed her delight, saying, “I feel rewarded for telling my experience of being exposed to the atomic bomb on that day.”

Michimasa Hirata, 81, said, “The award is just one step forward. I want to demand the Japanese government sign the nuke ban treaty.”

Fumiko Hashizume, 88, said ICAN’s winning of the Nobel Peace Prize has made her think about “the importance of hibakusha staying alive.”

Along with the world’s nuclear weapons states, Japan did not join the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which was adopted by 122 U.N. members, as it relies on the U.S. nuclear deterrence for protection.

A-bomb survivors hail ICAN’s 2017 Nobel Peace Prize win

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2017/10/07/national/bomb-survivors-hail-icans-2017-nobel-peace-prize-win/#.WdntJDtpGot>

Kyodo

Survivors of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki have welcomed the awarding of the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize to an international group campaigning to eliminate nuclear weapons, but voiced frustration that Japan has still not joined an international treaty banning them.

"The young people's activities have been recognized," Toshiyuki Mimaki, 75, of the Hiroshima Prefectural Confederation of A-Bomb Sufferers Organizations, told fellow member Seiko Ikeda, 85, after the two watched the Nobel broadcast side by side in Hiroshima on Friday.

The award to the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), follows the adoption in July of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. ICAN had worked with hibakusha in its campaign for the treaty.

During the treaty negotiations, Toshiki Fujimori, assistant secretary-general of Nihon Hidankyo, recounted before delegates his experience of the "hell on Earth" of the Hiroshima bombing.

He expressed hope the prize will "speed up the flow of countries joining the treaty," adding that he hopes ICAN can step up its appeals to countries to join the treaty in order to "make it more effective."

The treaty requires ratification by at least 50 nations to come into force.

Sunao Tsuboi, the 92-year-old Hidankyo chairman, said in a statement that he will "work with ICAN and everyone else as long as I live to realize a world without nuclear weapons."

The ban treaty was endorsed by more than 50 U.N. members in September, but the world's nuclear-armed states, Japan and other countries under the U.S. nuclear umbrella, did not participate in the negotiations.

In Nagasaki, upon hearing the Nobel news, members of the Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Survivors Council broke into applause, saying the achievement gave them new motivation to continue their work.

The group watched the announcement accompanied by a photograph of Nagasaki hibakusha and longtime campaigner Sumiteru Taniguchi, who died in August at the age of 88.

In Tokyo, senior members of Nihon Hidankyo watched the broadcast in hopes that their group might be chosen.

Terumi Tanaka, who stepped down as the group's secretary-general earlier this year, was happy for ICAN, while expressing "regret" that Hidankyo was not directly honored.

"We told the world about the inhumanity (of nuclear weapons). We laid the foundations for ICAN to do its work," Tanaka said.

He said the win will "make an impact" on Japan and other countries absent from the treaty.

The coalition of nongovernmental organizations that make up ICAN includes the Japan-based group Peace Boat. At Peace Boat's Tokyo office on Friday evening, a crowd of about 70 people shared their joy, with some breaking into tears.

Peace Boat founder Tatsuya Yoshioka said the awarding of the prize to ICAN "has the same value as if it were given to every hibakusha."

Hiroshima hibakusha Nobuo Miyake, 88, smiled and flashed a peace sign at the assembled press, telling reporters he was "full of emotion."

"This is a good opportunity to wake up to the importance of the nuclear weapons ban treaty," Miyake said. Separately, the older brother of Sadako Sasaki, who died of leukemia at age 12 a decade after the bombing of Hiroshima and whose mission to fold paper cranes made her an iconic figure, said the selection of ICAN for the prize had instilled him with a sense of pride.

"It's wonderful that these low-profile, often unseen activities have been recognized," said 76-year-old Masahiro Sasaki.

ICAN member celebrates with hibakusha



Akira Kawasaki, Peace Boat activists and hibakusha pose for a commemorative photo in Tokyo's Shinjuku Ward, on Oct. 9, 2017. (Mainichi)

October 10, 2017

Key ICAN member celebrates Nobel Peace Prize with A-bomb survivors

https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20171010/p2a/00m/0na/009000c#cxrecs_s

October 10, 2017 (Mainichi Japan)

Akira Kawasaki, co-leader of the Japanese NGO Peace Boat and a member of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), visited Peace Boat's Tokyo office on Oct. 9, where he reported on ICAN being awarded this year's Nobel Peace Prize.

- **【Related】** Nobel Peace Prize awarded to anti-nuclear campaign group
- **【Related】** Editorial: Nobel Peace Prize win for anti-nuke NGO reflects international opinion
- **【Related】** Nobel Peace Prize is also for 'hibakusha': ICAN chief

Among those present during Kawasaki's visit were atomic bomb survivors, or "hibakusha," as well as activists who have all campaigned tirelessly for an end to nuclear weapons.

After rushing back from an overseas business trip, Kawasaki, 48, told the crowd of about 100 people: "It is not me who should be (congratulated). This is an award that has been given to hibakusha and other activists trying to create a nuclear-free world."

Peace Boat, which takes part in ICAN activities, has been pursuing an origami crane project since 2008, whereby hibakusha travel around the world on a cruise and give testimonies about their experiences in different regions across the globe. About 170 hibakusha have participated in the project to date.

At the event on Oct. 9, Kawasaki explained, "It's been hard work conveying the voices of the hibakusha, due to factors such as cruise delays caused by adverse weather, and hibakusha feeling unwell on the day of a talk. However, I think we have managed to spread awareness across the globe regarding the word hibakusha."

He went on to address the hibakusha in the crowd, saying that, "All of us here won this award together. I want to say a 'huge congratulations' to you all."

Michiko Hattori, 88, a hibakusha who has previously testified as part of the Peace Boat campaign, said, "I'm delighted. It seems as though the experiences told by the hibakusha over the years have been worth it."

Meanwhile, 81-year-old Michimasa Hirata, who is also a hibakusha, said, "This is just one step in the right direction. First of all, we should strive toward making the Japanese government sign the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons."

Nobel Peace Prize: What will the impact be?

October 7, 2017

ICAN receives Nobel Peace Prize, propels anti-nuke movement to global stage

https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20171007/p2a/00m/0na/014000c#cxrecs_s

The Nobel Peace Prize was awarded Oct. 6 to the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), which was instrumental in the passage this past July of a United Nations treaty outlawing nuclear weapons.

- **【Related】** Nobel Peace Prize is also for 'hibakusha': ICAN chief
- **【Related】** Nobel Peace Prize awarded to anti-nuclear campaign group
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- **【Related】** Hibakusha: A-bomb survivor concerned over changing America

Seventy-two years after atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, it was the desperate appeals of atomic bomb survivors, or hibakusha, that created momentum for the international campaign to ban nuclear weapons.

The elderly hibakusha with whom ICAN chief Beatrice Fihn said she wanted to attend the award ceremony celebrated the news and renewed their resolve to keep pushing to make a world without nuclear weapons a reality.

Shortly after 6 p.m. Japan time on Oct. 6, the Hiroshima Prefectural Confederation of A-Bomb Sufferers Organization held a press conference at their office in Hiroshima's Naka Ward. "I'm happy that an organization that is working to abolish nuclear weapons has been awarded the prize," deputy chairman Tomoyuki Mimaki, 75, said. "We want to pass on our work to them so that they can realize a world without nuclear weapons."

Mimaki was in the gallery when the negotiations for the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons were held at the U.N. Headquarters in New York in June. "ICAN are our comrades," he said. "The awarding of the Peace Prize to the organization makes a whole lot of sense."

The average age of hibakusha from the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings is now over 81. Mimaki added, "I hope that ICAN and other organizations whose core members are young people will take over the movement now, and create a peaceful world without nuclear weapons."

Hiroshima Prefectural Confederation of A-Bomb Sufferers Organizations chairman Sunao Tsuboi, 92, released a comment reading, "Along with everyone at ICAN and others around the world, I will continue calling for the realization of a peaceful world without nuclear weapons as long as I live."

Responding to the news of ICAN's Nobel Peace Prize victory, 72-year-old Kunihiro Sakuma, chairman of the Hiroshima chapter of the Japan Confederation of A- and H- Bomb Sufferers Organizations (Nihon Hidankyo), wondered what the Japanese government thought of the news as that of the only country that has been attacked with nuclear weapons. He said, "A global push for a treaty led to its passage. It's time for the Japanese government to change its stance."

Minoru Hataguchi, 71, the last hibakusha to serve as director of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum, was exposed to radiation from the bomb in utero. He learned that ICAN was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize on television at his home in the Hiroshima Prefectural city of Hatsukaichi. "I hope that Japan, which is the only atomic-bombed country but did not sign the treaty, will move in a better direction."

Having been exposed to the atomic bomb when he was 4 years old, 76-year-old Yoshihide Yamakawa is calling for the establishment of a group to promote the "Hibakusha Appeal," an international petition calling for the banning of nuclear weapons that is now led by Nihon Hidankyo and others. He is certified as having atomic-bomb disease, and on the very day that ICAN won the Nobel Peace Prize, he had gone to the hospital for a regular checkup. Asked about the announcement, he said, "My doctor told me not to exert myself too much, but when, if not now, do we push forward with the petition?"

Koko Kondo, 72, who was exposed to the bomb when she was just 8 months old, said, "Regardless of the fact that Japan is under the nuclear umbrella (of the United States), it should be able to call for the abolition of nuclear weapons with head held high as the country that experienced the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki."

"ICAN worked as hard as it could toward the passage of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, and we worked with them," Terumi Tanaka, the 85-year-old secretary-general of Nihon Hidankyo, said. "Further global unity will be crucial in actually abolishing nuclear weapons, and this award will give the movement more momentum." On Oct. 6, Tanaka had been watching the announcements of the Nobel Prize online at the Tokyo office of the Nihon Hidankyo with the organization's adviser, Mikiso Iwasa, 88. Addressing the fact that the Peace Prize was awarded to ICAN and not Nihon Hidankyo, Tanaka said, "Having worked so hard for so long, I'm a bit disappointed. I'm feeling a combination of both happiness and disappointment."

Tanaka reflected on the anti-nuke movement thus far and said, "I think ICAN contributed greatly in enlarging the movement on a global scale." As for the impact of ICAN being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize shortly after passage of the U.N. treaty, he said, "I think that nuclear nations and their allies, including Japan, are in shock."

Meanwhile, Iwasa said, "We as hibakusha would like to have received the prize, but the Nobel committee likely awarded ICAN in the sense that it made the movement larger." He continued, "For 72 years, I have been calling for the abolition of nuclear weapons, but we hibakusha alone could not have transformed our hopes into a treaty. And now that movement is growing ever larger."

Yes we can

October 11, 2017

ICAN says the world can

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2017/10/11/editorials/ican-says-world-can/#.Wd9ZqTtpGos>

The dream of a world without nuclear weapons animates millions of people across the planet. Critics deride them as hopelessly naive idealists with no appreciation of the realities of power and the way the world really works. The award of the Nobel Peace Prize last week to the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) is a victory for the dreamers, a validation of the meaning and purpose behind the pursuit of the improbable — if not the impossible: the abolition of nuclear weapons.

ICAN was formed in 2007 on the proposal by the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, which won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1985. The group built on its success by launching grass-roots anti-nuclear movements worldwide. Today, it has 468 partner organizations in 101 countries.

Since its establishment, ICAN has made a treaty banning nuclear weapons its top priority and began to press that agenda at the 2010 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) review conference. The campaign has two purposes: first, and most obviously, to create the legal basis for making the possession and use of such weapons illegal. Second, ICAN seeks to shift the nuclear debate and allow non-nuclear weapon states — the overwhelming majority of countries — to drive the discussion.

Central to ICAN's work has been a focus on the attention on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear use. After a December 2014 conference, the Austrian government, at ICAN's prodding, issued a

“Humanitarian Pledge” to work with all stakeholders “to fill the legal gap for the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons.” In less than a year, 127 other countries signed that declaration as well.

Those governments and advocacy groups then took their campaign to the United Nations, where they pressed the case for a treaty banning nuclear weapons. They succeeded in July, when the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons was adopted by a vote of 122-1. The treaty prohibits the development, testing, production, manufacture, acquisition, possession, stockpiling, transfer, use, and threatened use of nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, and will enter into force once it has been ratified by 50 states.

Nuclear weapon states dismiss the project as hopelessly naive. They argue that the world is anarchic and states will do whatever they can to protect themselves. The idea that a mere treaty can actually ban weapons of such force and that can by themselves change the balance of power between countries is quaint — and dangerous.

Echoing gun rights advocates in the United States, nuclear weapon states and their allies insist that “if nuclear weapons are outlawed, only outlaws will have nuclear weapons.” In the absence of an authority to enforce judicial decisions — last summer’s Arbitral Tribunal decision on the South China Sea is proof of the “power” of such pronouncements — states will disregard any law or treaty that they deem detrimental to their national interest. If that would either ensure their security or give them an advantage over neighbors, the inclination to proliferate would be hard to resist.

In addition, the United States, with alliance networks around the world, notes — and with good reason — that its nuclear umbrella has mitigated the impulse of its allies to acquire nuclear capabilities of their own. If nuclear weapon states indicated that they would honor a ban treaty, other countries may well be tempted — or threatened — to acquire their own nuclear weapons.

There is another, more troubling, objection to the ban treaty: that support for it is actually a way of undermining the NPT. The ban treaty gets its energy and momentum from the belief that the NPT has failed in one of its most important tasks: promoting disarmament among nuclear weapon states. That is not correct: The world’s stockpile of nuclear weapons has diminished significantly, although that shrinkage has slowed as tensions between the U.S. and Russia intensify. Moreover, the NPT has been successful at halting the spread of such weapons. Some critics believe that discrediting the NPT’s disarmament platform provides a fig leaf for the disregard of its nonproliferation strictures. If that is correct, then the nuclear weapon states’ cynicism about a ban treaty could be quickly confirmed. (And speaking of cynicism: efforts that nuclear weapon states muster to minimize and defeat the ban treaty belie their claim that such documents are meaningless.)

Ban advocates are correct to insist that nuclear weapons constitute a humanitarian threat, and that any such use would be catastrophic. Their insistence, however, that nuclear weapons create insecurity is not as simple. Nuclear breakout does create insecurity, both for states attempting to change the status quo and their neighbors.

Therein lies the key. Radical shifts — in any direction — in the nuclear balance of power are destabilizing. But the world must be reminded that the long-term goal — and not merely the rhetorical retreat — is disarmament. ICAN, with its new Nobel Prize, does just that. This recognition is needed as world leaders

exchange taunts and threats and the risk of nuclear war is, says Berit Reiss-Andersen, leader of the Norwegian Nobel Committee, “greater than it has been for a long time.”

Correction: This story was updated on Oct. 12, 2017 to modify the date that the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War received the Nobel Peace Prize.

Angry and disappointed at Japan's attitude

October 12, 2017

Nobel Peace Prize laureate raps Japan's snub of nuclear ban treaty

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2017/10/12/national/politics-diplomacy/nobel-peace-prize-laureate-raps-japans-snub-nuclear-arms-treaty/#.Wd9ZCTtpGot>

Kyodo

A key member of an international organization that won this year's Nobel Peace Prize criticized the Japanese government Wednesday for ignoring a landmark U.N. treaty that outlaws nuclear weapons.

“This extraordinary silence on this treaty by the Japanese government is very, very disappointing and frustrating,” Akira Kawasaki of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons said at the Foreign Correspondents' Club of Japan.

ICAN won the prize last week for its efforts that led to the adoption in July of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

But the statement released by the Foreign Ministry about the award did not mention the treaty, Kawasaki said, adding that Tokyo is also expected to submit a draft U.N. resolution on nuclear disarmament without referring to the treaty.

Along with the world's nuclear weapons states, Japan did not sign the treaty, which was adopted by 122 U.N. members, as it relies on the U.S. nuclear deterrence for protection.

Kawasaki, an ICAN International Steering Group member and a co-chair of Japanese nongovernmental organization Peace Boat, also said that supporting the treaty will help Japan in dealing with threats from North Korea's nuclear and missile development.

The treaty “delegitimizes North Korean actions on nuclear weapons,” he said.

Sueichi Kido, 77, who survived the 1945 U.S. atomic bombing in Nagasaki at the age of 5, also attended the news conference as ICAN has been working with hibakusha in its campaign.

The fact that Japan did not sign the treaty “is not only embarrassing and sad but also makes me very angry,” Kido said.

Draft UN resolution totally ignores ban treaty

October 12, 2017

Japan's draft U.N. motion on nuclear weapons omits landmark treaty signed by 122 countries

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2017/10/12/national/japans-draft-u-n-motion-nuclear-weapons-omits-landmark-treaty-signed-122-countries/#.Wd9YbTtpGov>

Kyodo

NEW YORK – A draft U.N. resolution circulated by Japan on the elimination of nuclear weapons makes no mention of the recently adopted landmark treaty banning nuclear weapons, according to a copy obtained Wednesday.

The draft came after an international group last week won this year's Nobel Peace Prize for its efforts leading to the adoption in July of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

Japan, the only country to have suffered a nuclear attack, has been sponsoring a U.N. resolution calling for the abolition of nuclear weapons for more than two decades. But it boycotted U.N. negotiations on the pact along with nuclear-armed and other nuclear-umbrella nations.

The draft resolution "renews the determination" of all countries "to take united action towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons."

In language new to this draft, it says this can be achieved "through the easing of international tension and the strengthening of trust between states as envisioned in the Preamble of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in order to facilitate disarmament, and through strengthening the nuclear nonproliferation regime."

The nuclear-armed and nuclear-umbrella nations support pursuing the goal of eliminating weapons through adhering to the NPT, which went into force in 1970.

But out of frustration at a lack of progress, many nations instead pushed for the ban treaty, especially as the nuclear weapon states continue to modernize their arsenals.

Over the years, the Japan-led U.N. resolution has gained more and more sponsors. Last December the U.N. General Assembly backed it with 167 votes. Only North Korea, China, Russia and Syria opposed it, with 16 other nations abstaining.

Since last year, however, the context has changed with the nuclear weapons ban treaty having garnered support under the pressure of nuclear activists — including atomic bomb survivors, known as hibakusha. The nuclear weapons ban treaty, adopted in July by 122 countries, was opened for signatures in September. It will enter into force 90 days after the document has been ratified by 50 nations, and will be legally effective for an unlimited duration.

The draft of the Japan-led resolution also calls on nations to strengthen trust as well as "create conditions" to review military and security arrangements "taking into account the security environment."

Given the increasing North Korean nuclear threat, Japan and the United States, among others, believe in the necessity of maintaining nuclear weapons for their security.

The text also calls upon countries "create conditions that would allow for further reduction of nuclear weapons."

In similar language used in other years, the draft expresses "deep concern at the catastrophic humanitarian consequences" of nuclear weapons.

Aim is to make nuclear weapons unacceptable in people's minds

October 10 2017

Nobel winner says award will help mobilize for ultimate goal: ridding the world of nukes

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2017/10/10/world/nobel-winner-says-award-will-help-mobilize-ultimate-goal-ridding-world-nukes/#.WdyRLTtpGov>

AP, JIJI

UNITED NATIONS – The head of the anti-nuclear campaign that won this year’s Nobel Peace Prize said Monday **its goal is to make atomic weapons unacceptable in the minds of people in every country — and have all nuclear-armed nations listen to their citizens and give up their arsenals.**

Beatrice Fihn, executive director of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), told a news conference that for a long time nuclear weapons have been seen as “an issue of the past” that isn’t relevant.

But she said a potential nuclear arms race with nuclear nations modernizing their weapons and threats by U.S. President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un to use atomic weapons “makes this an urgent issue again.”

“I think that this Nobel Peace Prize can really bring about a much bigger movement against nuclear weapons,” Fihn said. “This gives us an enormous opportunity to reach out to new audiences, and to mobilize people once again.”

ICAN, currently a coalition of 468 organizations in 101 countries, is expecting to expand.

Ray Acheson, an ICAN steering committee member from the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom, told reporters that since the Nobel Prize announcement on Friday the campaign has received “a lot of new partnership requests.”

The Nobel committee cited Geneva-based ICAN for its work that led to the first-ever Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons that was agreed to by 122 countries at the United Nations in July. It opened for signature on Sept. 20 and already 53 countries have signed and three have ratified.

Fihn said ICAN’s “ambitious goal” is to get the 50 ratifications needed for the treaty to enter into force before the end of 2018.

The United States, which boycotted negotiations along with other nuclear powers, reacted to ICAN’s award saying the treaty “will not make the world more peaceful, will not result in the elimination of a single nuclear weapon, and will not enhance any state’s security.”

Fihn said the U.S. reaction was “quite expected,” but it shows the treaty is having “an impact on them.”

She stressed, however, that the Nobel Peace Prize isn’t going to make Trump give up nuclear weapons.

“But I don’t think that’s really what we’re doing here,” she said. “What we’re trying to do here is to make nuclear weapons unacceptable in the minds of the people, and that’s where civil society has the power.

That’s really what is changing things. And in the end, governments have to do what their people say.”

ICAN also lambasted the Japanese government for not signing the nuclear weapons ban treaty, calling on Tokyo, the only nation to have been attacked with nuclear weapons, to sign and ratify the pact.

Japan’s failure to join the treaty is “a betrayal of the hibakusha, who for more than 70 years have worked tirelessly to eliminate nuclear weapons,” Tim Wright, director for ICAN’s activities in the Asia-Pacific region, said at a the news conference.

“We must listen to their testimony and heed their call,” he said.

As for North Korea, Fihn said, Pyongyang won't disarm as long as it thinks nuclear weapons are acceptable, legitimate and justified.

The nuclear weapon states and those countries under their nuclear umbrella — including Japan — currently maintain they are necessary for security, she said.

"I think that is what this treaty is about — stop allowing them to justify having weapons of mass destruction that are only meant to indiscriminately slaughter hundreds of thousands of civilians," Fihn said.

She said it's been during previous times of big crises that "the most progress" has been made toward nuclear disarmament.

Five years after the Cuban missile crisis in 1962, the Treaty of Tlatelolco was signed prohibiting nuclear weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean, and later the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, she said. And during heightened Cold War tensions talks in Reykjavik between then U.S. President Ronald Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev in 1986 resulted in the treaty to eliminate intermediate and shorter-range nuclear and conventional missiles the following year.

Fihn said these crises, and the current escalating U.S.-North Korean tensions, "also bring about public mobilization."

"I think that that's where this peace prize is extremely timely, and very urgently needed attention on this issue," she said.

Hibakusha pleads for global ban at UN meeting

October 17, 2017

Hibakusha urges global nuclear ban at UN

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20171017_09/

A survivor of the 1945 Nagasaki atomic bombing has urged countries around the world to sign a treaty banning nuclear arms at a UN meeting in New York.

Tokuko Kimura, an 82-year-old survivor - known as "hibakusha" in Japanese - spoke at a session organized by Austria's UN representative and a Japanese NGO on Monday. Austria played a leading role in the adoption of the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in July.

Kimura was 10-years-old when the Japanese city was bombed by the United States in 1945. She described how badly burned victims sought shelter at her house, located more than 3 kilometers away from ground zero. She said she saw some die after taking a sip of water.

Kimura also referred to a classmate who appeared healthy for a while but died a few years after the bombing, apparently due to the effects of radiation exposure. She said she wants no one in any country to experience the same kind of hardship that she and fellow survivors have endured.

Among those in attendance was a member of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, or ICAN, an organization which won this year's Nobel Peace Prize.

The ICAN member said Kimura's speech was a reminder that the campaign to abolish nuclear arms must move forward. The member added that **governments around the world should listen to the testimonies of hibakusha when making decisions about the future of nuclear arms.**

Nuclear armed states oppose the UN treaty, along with countries that depend on the nuclear umbrella, including Japan.

Japan is risking "a decline in trust"

October 17, 2017

Editorial: Japan's weakened UN draft resolution on nukes erodes trust

<https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20171017/p2a/00m/0na/004000c>

This year, the Japanese government again submitted a draft resolution to the United Nations calling for a complete ban on nuclear weapons.

- **【Related】** Japan criticized for toned-down UN draft resolution on nukes
- **【Related】** A-bomb survivors rap PM Abe for Japan's snub of nuke weapons ban treaty
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Japan has been submitting draft resolutions calling for a complete abolition of nuclear weapons to the U.N. every year since 1994, and they have been adopted for 23 years in a row. Last year's resolution was supported by 167 parties, or nearly 90 percent of the member nations.

The efforts of Japan as the only country to have been attacked with nuclear weapons in warfare have played a part in other countries' sympathizing with the resolution. However, **it is said that some countries that have supported the resolution in the past may turn against it this time.**

The reason for the shift is apparently that Japan's latest resolution makes no reference to the U.N. Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons passed in July, and its phrases calling for nuclear disarmament have on the whole been watered down.

Positive moves toward nuclear disarmament have been seen on an international scale this year. Following the July adoption of the U.N. Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), which was instrumental in the passage of the treaty, was this month named winner of the Nobel Peace Prize.

Japan has been a leader on foundational principles on the elimination of nuclear weapons. Yet it sidestepped negotiations on the treaty, and has distanced itself from the activities of ICAN. Moreover, its resolution this year tones down its requests to nuclear powers.

The 2016 resolution states that the General Assembly reaffirms "the unequivocal undertaking of the nuclear-weapon states to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals." In this year's draft,

the text was changed to "the unequivocal undertaking of the nuclear weapon states to fully implement the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons."

Some say the change came because the U.S. opposes the treaty banning nuclear weapons, and Japan, which relies on the U.S. nuclear umbrella, is unable to resist pressure from the United States.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) limits the states with nuclear weapons to the United States, Britain, France China and Russia, but also requires these countries to engage in nuclear disarmament negotiations.

Dissatisfaction from non-nuclear states that nuclear powers were not fulfilling their obligations under the NPT led to the formation of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

If the latest resolution softens its stance on the obligations of nuclear powers without giving an appraisal of the nuclear prohibition treaty led by non-nuclear states, it is going against the principles of nuclear abolition.

The resolution underscores the threat from North Korea. People could be forgiven for thinking that the resolution is being used to respond to North Korea rather than to pursue the elimination of nuclear weapons.

North Korea, China and Russia have opposed adoption of the resolution in recent years, and last year they were joined by Syria. If more countries follow suit, it would be a diplomatic blow for Japan.

By prioritizing security and backtracking on nuclear disarmament, Japan cannot avoid a decline in trust, and that will only damage national interests in the long term.

Notable changes in the draft anti-nuke resolution

October 21, 2017

Japan waters down text of annual anti-nuclear resolution to imply acceptable use of nukes

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2017/10/21/national/politics-diplomacy/u-s-pressure-japan-waters-text-anti-nuclear-resolution/#.WetCrXZpGos>

by Masakatsu Ota
Kyodo

Japan's annual diplomatic effort to demonstrate its anti-nuclear credentials and create momentum for disarmament has run into a major obstacle in the form of its most important ally, as well as an atmosphere of division between states possessing atomic weapons and those without them.

A draft resolution recently proposed by the Abe government to the United Nations General Assembly was dramatically watered down under diplomatic pressure from the United States, government sources have revealed.

Japan, the only nation to have been attacked with atomic weapons, saw the U.S. destroy Hiroshima and Nagasaki with two atomic bombs 72 years ago. It has proposed a series of draft resolutions on nuclear disarmament to the General Assembly since 1994.

Last year, its proposed resolution was adopted at the assembly's plenary session with support from 167 nations, including the United States, while China, North Korea, Russia and Syria opposed and 16 other nations abstained.

In the middle of October, Japan submitted a resolution titled "United action with renewed determination toward the total elimination of nuclear weapons."

Close examination of the text has found a few major changes from past resolutions.

Since 2010, Japan has drafted annual resolutions that include the same common sentence, which emphasizes "deep concern at the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons."

The phrase, "the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons," has been a keyword used by international movements pursuing a denuclearized world in recent years.

In July, this anti-nuclear campaign culminated in the adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons at the United Nations — the first international law that prohibits state parties from developing, testing, possessing and using nuclear weapons in any manner, including "threat of use."

In the most recently proposed resolution, the government deleted the word "any" from the frequently used phrase, rendering it as "deep concern at the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons use."

It seems a minor rhetorical change, but the deletion of "any" has raised concerns and sparked severe criticism from nuclear disarmament specialists in Japan.

"The omission of the word 'any' implies there could be a case of nuclear weapon use that would not cause inhumane consequences and therefore this type of use might be permitted," professor Tatsujiro Suzuki, director of the Research Center for Nuclear Weapons Abolition at Nagasaki University, pointed out.

"It can't be helped if Japan will be regarded (by the international community) as an unfit advocate for the abolition of nuclear weapons," Suzuki said.

"The Japanese draft resolution looks like one proposed by the United States or any other nuclear weapon states," said Akira Kawasaki, an International Steering Group member of ICAN, or the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons.

ICAN will receive the Nobel Peace Prize at the end of this year in Oslo for its worldwide grass-roots campaign for the adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

During a recent interview, Kawasaki said “the deletion of ‘any’ is so problematic” that several nations which have supported Japan’s annual resolutions in the past may not become a cosponsor of the resolution this year.

That would pose a serious setback for Japan, which has taken a leading position in the international disarmament based on its strong credentials.

Governmental sources suggested that the administration of U.S. President Donald Trump opposes including the word “any” in the draft resolution, and that Japan made the concession to get Washington’s support for the document.

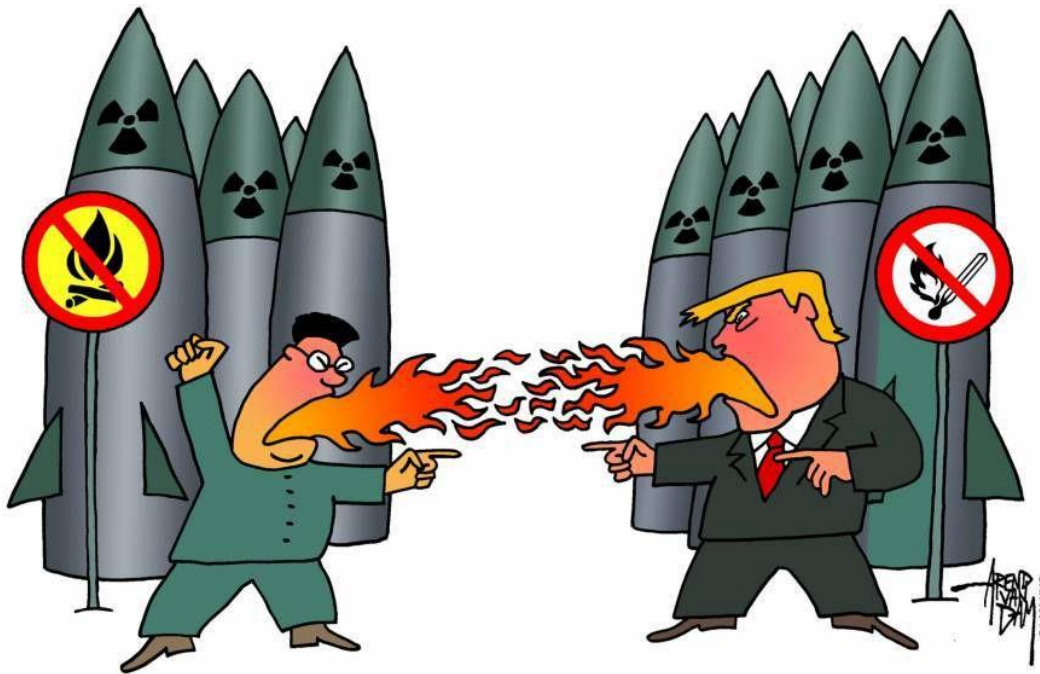
Trump has indicated a desire to accelerate the modernization of the U.S. nuclear arsenal in light of North Korea’s nuclear and missile provocations. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has been deepening security cooperation with the United States and repeatedly requested more U.S. security assurances for Japan, including the “nuclear umbrella.”

Another conspicuous change in the latest Japanese resolution is that it urges only North Korea to sign and ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty without delay, rather than the eight nations it named for the previous resolutions.

Japan is a key advocate of accelerating the CTBT, which requires ratification by eight nations including North Korea, China and the United States. The U.S. Republican Party is widely known as a strong opponent of CTBT.

“Our new draft resolution is the result of policy considerations for creating a common ground between nuclear weapon states and nonnuclear weapons states for furthering a practical approach (toward nuclear abolition),” said one official of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs without specifically explaining why they decided to make the notable changes in the draft resolution.

Nuclearise Japan (and S. Korea)?



October 24, 2017

An idea buds in the U.S. that Japan should go nuclear

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2017/10/24/commentary/world-commentary/idea-buds-u-s-japan-go-nuclear/#.We8tEnZpGou>

Amid mounting exchanges of harsh words between U.S. President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, there is a rising opinion within certain quarters in the United States that Japan and South Korea should be armed with nuclear weapons.

Pat Buchanan, a conservative commentator, may gain support from some populace when he asks why the U.S. has to defend Japan and South Korea, whose economies are 100 times and 40 times, respectively, larger than the North's. Echoing what Trump said during the campaign last year, Buchanan points out that while North Korea's defense spending accounts for 25 percent of its gross domestic product, the comparable figures are 2.6 percent for South Korea and less than 1 percent for Japan. Under these circumstances, how long will Japan be able to rely on the U.S. nuclear umbrella and maintain its long-standing policy of neither possessing or building nuclear weapons or permitting their introduction into the country?

Triggering the idea of nuclearizing Japan and South Korea were comments made by Susan Rice, former national security adviser under President Barack Obama, and James Clapper, ex-director of national intelligence. Writing for the op-ed page of The New York Times on Aug. 10, Rice said Trump's mention of "fire and fury" against Pyongyang was in total disregard of 23,000 U.S. military personnel and 200,000 family members living in Seoul among the 26 million population of the South Korean capital, which lies within the North's shooting range. Calling a pre-emptive strike against the North — said to be among Trump's options — a reckless idea, Rice proposed that the U.S. should recognize the North as a nuclear power while controlling its behavior so that it would never use the weapons. Three days later, Clapper said in a CNN interview that denuclearizing the North is not the only solution. Both Rice and Clapper have thus favored de facto recognition of the North's possession of nuclear arms, which in turn would lower the hurdles for negotiating with the North — thereby playing right into Kim's hands.

Those arguments were rebutted not only by the Trump administration but also by the Wall Street Journal, which in its Aug. 30 editorial said the North's firing of an intermediate-range ballistic missile over Japan is changing the security landscape in Northeast Asia and pushing Japan toward owning its own nuclear arsenal. Noting that Japan had enough plutonium to build more than 1,000 nuclear warheads and sufficient know-how to do so within months, the Journal said Japanese leaders might change their minds against possessing nuclear weapons once they feel the U.S. cannot be depended on in the event of a major crisis.

On Aug. 3, Christopher Wallace, anchorman of the Fox News, said the need for arming with nuclear weapons is being felt by a growing number of people in Japan — an idea which he said had been utterly unthinkable in the past. Regardless of whether such arms are to be developed independently or to be supplied from another country, Wallace said, such thinking is no longer monopolized by extremists. It is not clear how much he is knowledgeable about what's happening in Japan, but it should be borne in mind that the idea of nuclearizing Japan has started being discussed in an influential media outlet deemed close to Trump.

Writing for the Sept. 1 issue of "azcentral.com," a digital outlet of the Arizona Republic newspaper, columnist Robert Robb renewed his support for Trump's idea of arming Japan and South Korea with nuclear weapons, which the president fanned as candidate in the 2016 campaign, and said that once the North became capable of firing intercontinental ballistic missiles to the U.S. mainland, the deterrent power of the American nuclear umbrella for the two allies would weaken.

How many isolationist Americans are there who think that should the U.S. withdraw from Asia even to a small extent, the resulting vacuum should be filled by Japan and South Korea? A part of the answer may be found in a column written for the Sept. 5 issue of the Wall Street Journal by Walter Russel Mead, professor of foreign affairs at Bard College and distinguished scholar at the Hudson Institute.

Mead says there are two schools of thought within the U.S. government about Japan having nuclear weapons.

One advocated by top White House advisers, he says, is that it is in the best interest of the U.S. to maintain the status quo in the Pacific region while keeping Japan as it is.

The other group, which follows Trump's "America First" doctrine, would think the American diplomacy will have succeeded, and not failed, if Northeast Asian countries start arming themselves with nuclear weapons, according to Mead.

He goes on to say that China's geopolitical ambitions would be contained if Japan, South Korea and Taiwan became nuclear powers, enabling the U.S. to withdraw its troops from South Korea. If this scenario leads to making America's allies pay more for containment of China, he says, that would be an ideal situation under the "America First" slogan.

The Trump administration is demanding allies such as Japan, South Korea and the NATO member nations not just to boost their defense spending but to play greater roles to alleviate burdens on the U.S. As Mead has said, Trump is not alone in believing that arming the Northeast Asian countries with nuclear weapons would spell a success for the American diplomacy.

South Korea, meanwhile, is reacting much more seriously than Japan to the North's behaviors. An opinion survey conducted shortly after Pyongyang's nuclear test on Sept. 3 showed that 68 percent of the South Koreans said American tactical nuclear weapons, which had been taken out of the country in 1991, should

be brought back, while 60 percent thought their country should develop its own nuclear arms. That subject was discussed when South Korean Defense Minister Song Young-moo met with his American counterpart James Mattis in Washington in early September. Later, both a high-ranking White House official and Senator John McCain said such possibility could not be ruled out.

Whether South Korea should either develop nuclear weapons on its own or buy them from another country was discussed by Lee Choon-geun of the Korean Institute for International Economic Policy during a debate session on March 3, 2011.

His statements can be summarized as follows: (1) if South Korea had its own nuclear weapons, Japan would almost automatically follow suit; (2) that would put Japan on equal footing with Britain and France with hundreds of nuclear warheads; (3) that in turn would have a devastating impact on China's ambition of building a global hegemony; and (4) with Japan armed with nuclear weapons, China would find it hard to be a ruler of Asia, let alone the world.

Lee went on to say that the easy way for China to prevent South Korea from having nuclear weapons is to use its influence over Pyongyang and force Kim and his cohorts to abandon their nuclear ambitions. This is exactly what is being attempted by the U.S. and the international community today.

Japan must think seriously of what to do in the event of an emergence of a unified Korea armed with nuclear weapons. In the 1960s, before China followed France in joining the nuclear club, Gen. Pierre Gallois, a French nuclear strategist and one of President Charles de Gaulle's advisers, had an exclusive interview with a major Japanese newspaper, in which he said Japan, too, would soon arm itself with nuclear weapons.

Although his prediction did not come true, there existed a sense of mission in Japan's journalism — though as a minority opinion — to query the public as to what is the theory behind nuclear armament. Half a century later, the situation in Northeast Asia demands the same question asked by Gallois. Japan can no longer keep seeking to duck whenever difficult national security problems arise.

This is an abridged translation of an article from the October issue of Sentaku, a monthly magazine covering political, social and economic scenes. More English articles from the magazine can be read at www.sentaku-en.com

Is a nuclear weapon-free world compatible with nuclear power?

Received from Gordon Edwards (President of the Canadian Coalition for Nuclear Responsibility)

To Friends and colleagues: October 16, 2017

I am just back from a 2-day conference in Winnipeg entitled "Human Dimensions and Perspective in a Nuclear World: Legal Issues of Non-Proliferation, Disarmament and the Right to Nuclear Energy". The conference was hosted by Dr. Jonathan Black-Branch, Dean of the Law School of the University of Manitoba, and sponsored by David Newman, who at one time was the Minister of Energy for Manitoba, using a legacy left by his father.

Below is a link to the extended PowerPoint that I prepared for the event.

My presentation was entitled “Can We Have a Nuclear Weapons Free World and Still Have Nuclear Power?” My answer is, “probably not”. The argument is based on the fact that commercial nuclear power requires the use of nuclear fuel. That means either uranium or plutonium. Most reactors require enriched uranium, and that means the existence of enrichment plants. Plutonium fuel requires the use of a reprocessing facility to extract plutonium from irradiated nuclear fuel.

But any country possessing a stock of Highly Enriched Uranium (HEU) could build an atomic bomb very quickly, so possessing HEU is a deal-breaker in a world without nuclear weapons — as no neighbouring country could have sufficient confidence that A-Bombs are not being built clandestinely. The same can be said for stockpiles of separated plutonium. So in a nuclear weapons free world, you probably cannot allow stocks of highly enriched uranium or of plutonium. That being the case, can you allow all countries to have operating enrichment plants and/or reprocessing plants if they wish? Under such circumstances, how could there be sufficient trust as there would be no “timely warning” of a country’s efforts to “break out” from the “no nuclear weapons” club? Nuclear explosive materials would be just around the corner.

Contrariwise, if there were no enrichment plants or reprocessing plants in existence, having been all dismantled, AND if existing stocks of HEU were “down-blended” to a low enrichment level that makes the uranium unusable as a nuclear explosive, AND if existing stocks of separated plutonium were blended back in with the highly radioactive fission products from which they were originally extracted, THEN a certain amount of stability could be achieved.

In such a world, no-one could build an A-Bomb or an H-Bomb without first building and operating either an enrichment plant or a reprocessing plant, and these activities could be detected by neighbouring countries and provide a degree of timely warning that would allow other political or military measures to be taken.

In the case of HEU, this would be a formidable obstacle to a would-be proliferator because enrichment technology is slow, vast, and highly energy intensive, so HEU simply cannot be acquired quickly. We’re talking at least a year to 18 months.

In the case of plutonium the obstacle is less formidable, because in principle chemical separation can be achieved in a matter of weeks, despite the extremely high radiation fields from the fission products. But the heat generated by the spent fuel would make the operation detectable by infrared cameras and the entire operation could not be carried out “overnight” — nor could the spent fuel be transported across roads, bridges, or borders, without detection. The heat and radiation from the fission products provides not only a barrier but also a means of detection, neither of which would apply if the plutonium were already separated ahead of time. Separated plutonium can be assembled into warheads and transported over roads, bridges and borders without detection. No warning.

See www.ccnr.org/non_prolif.html .

But most knowledgeable observers say that we MUST have nuclear power if we want to limit, reduce and eventually eliminate nuclear weapons, because the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) distinguishes between Nuclear Weapons States (NWS = USA, Russia, China, UK, and France) and non-Nuclear Weapons States (NNWS = everybody else), and the NNWS agree not to develop nuclear weapons as long as they are

provided access to the benefits of nuclear power. In fact, the NPT declares that everyone has an “inalienable right” to the peaceful use of nuclear energy. So what can you do within the existing Treaty legal limitations?

I argue that the NPT has already been reinterpreted voluntarily by those signing the treaty, and that further reinterpretation may be entertained without necessarily rewriting the treaty (which everyone is afraid to do for fear that the entire NPT might all unravel very quickly).

Case in point: Article V of the NPT promises that every country signing the treaty has the right to use “peaceful nuclear explosives”. But everyone now realizes that this is a crazy idea, because the only fundamental difference between a peaceful nuclear explosive and a non-peaceful nuclear explosive is the intention behind its use. You cannot have a world without nuclear weapons if peaceful nuclear explosives are kept at the ready. Similarly, in a nuclear weapons free world, people can’t keep their own stash of HEU or of plutonium, or they can assemble nuclear weapons very quickly and without warning.

In a world without nuclear weapons, can everyone have their own enrichment plants or their own reprocessing plants? Probably not, as these facilities can make nuclear explosive materials and they are operating 24/7. So access to “peaceful” nuclear technology cannot be unlimited if you expect a non-nuclear weapons world to be sustainable.

Now back to the NPT. Just because countries are entitled to have the benefits of nuclear energy doesn’t mean they have to have nuclear reactors. So what are the benefits of nuclear energy? There’s nuclear electricity, and nuclear medicine, and radioactive isotopes. That’s about it. Do those benefits need nuclear reactors? and do they require the use of uranium? and must they entail the creation of plutonium?

(1) Electricity. There are many ways of generating electricity! So if a country wants nuclear energy for electricity production, let’s provide the electricity — but not the reactors. They get the benefit of electricity without the curse of high-level nuclear waste and the catastrophe potential of a nuclear power reactor. As Amory Lovins pointed out in a different context, nobody wants a barrel of petroleum in their living room, what they want is light, heat, mobility — the benefits that oil can provide. If those benefits can be obtained in other ways, they will not miss the oil. Similarly, if the benefits of nuclear energy can be provided in other ways, will the beneficiaries miss the fact that they don’t have a nuclear reactor in their back yard?

(2) Radioactive isotopes for cancer therapy and other uses. There are ways of producing isotopes that do not require uranium or reactors -- so let’s provide the isotopes and alternative radiotherapy devices that do not depend on uranium or reactors.

(3) Peaceful nuclear explosives to create harbours etc. Let’s provide the earth-moving capability without nuclear explosions that produce contaminated soil and radioactive fallout.

Indeed, we can keep uranium in the ground and still meet all the legitimate benefits of nuclear energy. It isn’t all easy going, there are many challenges along the way, but it is ultimately do-able. And it is already happening in a big way. For in reality, the only thing that absolutely needs uranium is . . . the building of

nuclear weapons. Without uranium there would be no nuclear weapons of any description. Is that such a bad thing?

Gordon Edwards.

Here is the link to my Winnipeg PowerPoint (October 2017):

http://ccnr.org/GE_winnipeg_2017.pdf

RCI Interview on the Nuclear Weapons Ban Treaty (Edwards, 2017)

<http://www.rcinet.ca/en/2017/10/06/nobel-peace-prize-acknowledges-anti-nuclear-movement/>

Sobering British TV discussion on nuclear weapons and nuclear energy (1976)

http://ccnr.org/Peaceful_Atom.html

Article written for Project Ploughshares (Edwards, 1985)

http://ccnr.org/non_prolif.html

Why is Japan snubbing nuke ban treaty?

October 27, 2017

Japan-sponsored anti-nuclear draft faces criticism

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20171027_16/

A draft resolution submitted by Japan that calls for the abolition of nuclear weapons is facing criticism at a UN committee. The draft will be put to a vote on Friday.

The UN General Assembly's First Committee, which deals with disarmament, debated a number of draft resolutions on Thursday.

Japan, the only country to have suffered atomic bombings, has presented similar drafts for 24 years in a row. All 23 were adopted.

Japan's latest draft resolution stresses the importance of security arrangements amid the nuclear and missile threat from North Korea. It does not mention the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons that was adopted in July.

The legally-binding UN treaty was adopted with support from the non-nuclear nations. Japan and the United States are among the countries that oppose the treaty.

South Africa, Brazil and other supporters of the treaty voiced their opposition to the Japan-sponsored draft resolution.

Austria's disarmament envoy, Thomas Hajnoczi, hinted that his country would abstain from the vote. He pointed out that the draft resolution puts emphasis on building trust among the parties rather than nuclear disarmament. He added that the draft ignores the historic agreement to ban nuclear weapons.

Japan's ambassador on disarmament, Nobushige Takamizawa, says the draft resolution seeks to promote nuclear disarmament practically and steadily by trying to find common ground.

The draft proposed by Japan has over 70 co-sponsors, compared with 108 last year.

October 25, 2017

EDITORIAL: Japan betraying global trust by snubbing nuke ban treaty

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201710250031.html>

A draft resolution on the elimination of nuclear weapons, proposed by the Japanese government to the U.N. General Assembly earlier this month, is causing ripples around the world.

The draft has betrayed the international community's trust in Japan, the world's only victim of nuclear weapons.

We say this because the document makes no mention of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which was adopted in July by 122 nations. In addition, the proposal's language has been considerably toned down where it calls for nuclear disarmament by the world's nuclear powers.

For the past 24 years, Japan has religiously proposed draft resolutions on the elimination of nuclear weapons to the U.N. General Assembly every year. Last year's draft resolution received the support of 167 nations.

But this year's proposal has deeply disappointed the non-nuclear nations that have signed on to the new nuclear weapons ban treaty.

When this year's Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) for contributing to the establishment of the nuclear weapons ban treaty, Japan's Foreign Ministry did not issue a statement until two days later.

Citing "a difference of approach" between ICAN and the Japanese government, the ministry did not even mention the treaty.

Let us reconfirm the significance of this treaty once again.

It condemns nuclear weapons as an "absolute evil" and spells out that they must never be used, thereby establishing this rule as international law.

Humanity realized the utter inhumanity of nuclear weapons when the United States dropped them on Hiroshima and Nagasaki 72 years ago.

But after World War II, the United States, the former Soviet Union and other major world powers rushed into a nuclear arms race, preaching the nuclear deterrence theory--that being armed with nuclear weapons will discourage attacks from other countries.

The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, the creation of which is owed to the persistence of ICAN and Hiroshima and Nagasaki atomic bomb survivors, among others, focuses on the fundamental inhumanity of nuclear weapons and rejects the nuclear deterrence theory.

There is no question that this treaty represents the first solid step toward the realization of a "world without nuclear weapons."

So then, why on earth is the world's only victim of nuclear attacks snubbing this treaty?

In August, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe declared in no uncertain terms that Japan would not sign it. Foreign Minister Taro Kono explained that if nuclear weapons are banned before North Korea and China give up theirs, problems will arise with nuclear deterrence.

As is obvious from Kono's statement, Japan's reliance on the U.S. nuclear umbrella for national security is the greatest hurdle to the acceptance of the nuclear weapons ban treaty.

There is even the argument that the importance of the U.S. nuclear umbrella has grown with North Korea's repeated nuclear tests and missile launches. And U.S. President Donald Trump continues to reiterate his intention of beefing up America's nuclear capabilities, which is escalating tensions.

But the vicious cycle of "nuke for nuke" is only raising the danger of accidental use of nuclear weapons. Even if it is difficult for Japan to immediately leave the nuclear umbrella, surely it is Japan's responsibility as the only nuclear victim to seriously seek a path to joining the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

Since September, 53 additional nations have signed the treaty. But these do not include a single nuclear power, nor any country that is under the U.S. nuclear umbrella. Should Japan signal its intention to join the treaty, the impact would be colossal.

As a self-appointed "bridge" between nuclear powers and non-nuclear powers, Japan is totally wrong to turn its back on this treaty, which is supported by a majority of the international community.

Hibakusha invited to Norway

October 26, 2017

Hibakusha invited to Nobel Peace Prize ceremony

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20171026_28/

Three survivors of the 1945 atomic bombings in Hiroshima and Nagasaki have been invited to the Nobel Peace Prize award ceremony in Norway in December.

Akira Kawasaki, a Japanese member of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, or ICAN, which won this year's Nobel Peace Prize, made the announcement on Thursday.

He was meeting in Hiroshima with about 30 atomic-bomb survivors known as hibakusha.

Kawasaki said that the organization decided to invite two hibakusha from Japan and one from abroad to attend the ceremony in Oslo in December.

Kawasaki noted that ICAN was awarded the prize for its efforts that led to the adoption of the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, but that its goal is to eliminate nuclear weapons from the world.

He said that as the treaty has only been signed by some 50 countries, ICAN will continue to work to increase the number of signatories.

One survivor said that the power of the civic movement aspiring for a world without nuclear arms has been recognized by the global community.

The hibakusha said that power of citizens should be further consolidated to continue the fight against nuclear weapons.

Hibakusha disappointed by Japan UN resolution

October 28, 2017

A-bomb survivors disappointed with Japanese-led antinuke resolution

https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20171028/p2g/00m/0dm/072000c#cxrecs_s

NAGASAKI/HIROSHIMA (Kyodo) -- Survivors of the 1945 U.S. atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki expressed disappointment Saturday with the adoption of a Japanese-led resolution by a U.N. panel that called for the elimination of nuclear weapons but contained a watered-down text.

Tadako Kawazoe, a 73-year-old resident of Nagasaki who survived the atomic bombing of the southwestern Japan city, vented her frustration at the resolution, which made no mention of the landmark

nuclear weapons ban treaty adopted in July or of the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons use.

The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons was adopted with the support of 122 countries, but nuclear-armed states as well as their allies, including Japan, who receive security guarantees, have not endorsed the treaty.

The Japanese-led resolution, passed by a U.N. panel on Friday, is "out of touch" with the treaty outlawing nuclear weapons, said Kawazoe, who observed negotiators on the treaty at the U.N. headquarters in June.

The latest resolution "could be read as if it partially approves nuclear weapons," Kawazoe said, adding, "Are all the efforts to eliminate nuclear weapons just mere talk?"

Masanori Nakashima, 87, who heads an A-bomb sufferers' union in Nagasaki Prefecture, said, "There is no such thing as clean nuclear weapons. I don't trust lawmakers who cannot understand such a simple thing."

Iwao Nakanishi, an 87-year-old resident of Hiroshima who survived the atomic bombing of the western Japan city, said he was "just dismayed at how (the resolution) does not mention" the treaty at all, nor the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, this year's Nobel Peace Prize winner.

"Japan's position may weaken at a time when the world is moving toward nuclear abolition," said Nakanishi, who was 15 and at a factory 2.7 kilometers away from ground zero at the time of the Hiroshima bombing.

Kiyomi Matsuda, a 60-year-old local resident who was visiting the Peace Memorial Park in Hiroshima, said, "Japan should not be so hesitant" in moving the antinuclear movement forward, adding that the public should also make greater calls to rid the world of nuclear weapons.

Hiroshima was bombed on Aug. 6, 1945, and Nagasaki three days later.

Japan loses support

October 28, 2017

FM Kono points to security environment after Japan anti-nuke resolution loses support

https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20171028/p2a/00m/0na/013000c#cxrecs_s

Foreign Minister Taro Kono has pointed to the **impact of differing security environments among non-nuclear states** as one factor behind the reduced support for a Japan-backed United Nations resolution calling for the elimination of atomic arms.

- **【Related】** Japan's antinuke resolution passes, but support down from past years
- **【Related】** Japan criticized for toned-down UN draft resolution on nukes
- **【Related】** A-bomb survivors rap PM Abe for Japan's snub of nuke weapons ban treaty

The resolution, which Japan has submitted annually for 24 years, was passed by the U.N. General Assembly's First Committee on Oct. 27, but by 23 fewer nations than the 2016 version.

The shift in support "is a manifestation of the differences not just between nuclear and non-nuclear states, but in the positions among non-nuclear states as well, based on their security environment," Kono said in a statement released after the vote. He also emphasized that Japan "sought to provide common ground that would allow all countries to renew their commitment towards nuclear disarmament efforts."

Kono did not comment on the resolution's lack of any reference to the U.N. Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons passed in July.

Nuclear option reopened?

October 28, 2017

North Korea Rouses Neighbors to Reconsider Nuclear Weapons

https://www.nytimes.com/2017/10/28/world/asia/north-korea-nuclear-weapons-japan-south-korea.html?_r=0

By DAVID E. SANGER, CHOE SANG-HUN and MOTOKO RICH

As North Korea races to build a weapon that for the first time could threaten American cities, its neighbors are debating whether they need their own nuclear arsenals.

The North's rapidly advancing capabilities have scrambled military calculations across the region, and doubts are growing the United States will be able to keep the atomic genie in the bottle.

For the first time in recent memory, there is a daily argument raging in both South Korea and Japan — sometimes in public, more often in private — about the nuclear option, driven by worry that the United States might hesitate to defend the countries if doing so might provoke a missile launched from the North at Los Angeles or Washington.

In South Korea, polls show 60 percent of the population favors building nuclear weapons. And nearly 70 percent want the United States to reintroduce tactical nuclear weapons for battlefield use, which were withdrawn a quarter-century ago.

There is very little public support for nuclear arms in Japan, the only nation ever to suffer a nuclear attack, but many experts believe that could reverse quickly if North and South Korea both had arsenals.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has campaigned for a military buildup against the threat from the North, and Japan sits on a stockpile of nuclear material that could power an arsenal of 6,000 weapons. Last Sunday, he won a commanding majority in parliamentary elections, fueling his hopes of revising the nation's pacifist Constitution.

This brutal calculus over how to respond to North Korea is taking place in a region where several nations have the material, the technology, the expertise and the money to produce nuclear weapons.

Beyond South Korea and Japan, there is already talk in Australia, Myanmar, Taiwan and Vietnam about whether it makes sense to remain nuclear-free if others arm themselves — heightening fears that North Korea could set off a chain reaction in which one nation after another feels threatened and builds the bomb.

In a recent interview, Henry A. Kissinger, one of the few nuclear strategists from the early days of the Cold War still living, said he had little doubt where things were headed.

“If they continue to have nuclear weapons,” he said of North Korea, “nuclear weapons must spread in the rest of Asia.”

“It cannot be that North Korea is the only Korean country in the world that has nuclear weapons, without the South Koreans trying to match it. Nor can it be that Japan will sit there,” he added. “So therefore we’re talking about nuclear proliferation.”

Such fears have been raised before, in Asia and elsewhere, without materializing, and the global consensus against the spread of nuclear weapons is arguably stronger than ever.

But North Korea is testing America’s nuclear umbrella — its commitment to defend its allies with nuclear weapons if necessary — in a way no nation has in decades. Similar fears of abandonment in the face of the Soviet Union’s growing arsenal helped lead Britain and France to go nuclear in the 1950s.

President Trump, who leaves Nov. 3 for a visit to Asia, has intensified these insecurities in the region. During his presidential campaign, he spoke openly of letting Japan and South Korea build nuclear arms even as he argued they should pay more to support the American military bases there.

“There is going to be a point at which we just can’t do this anymore,” he told The New York Times in March 2016. Events, he insisted, were pushing both nations toward their own nuclear arsenals anyway.

Mr. Trump has not raised that possibility in public since taking office. But he has rattled the region by engaging in bellicose rhetoric against North Korea and dismissing talks as a “waste of time.”

In Seoul and Tokyo, many have already concluded that North Korea will keep its nuclear arsenal, because the cost of stopping it will be too great — and they are weighing their options.

Capability to Build the Bomb

Long before North Korea detonated its first nuclear device, several of its neighbors secretly explored going nuclear themselves.

Japan briefly considered building a “defensive” nuclear arsenal in the 1960s despite its pacifist Constitution. South Korea twice pursued the bomb in the 1970s and 1980s, and twice backed down under American pressure. Even Taiwan ran a covert nuclear program before the United States shut it down.

Today, there is no question that both South Korea and Japan have the material and expertise to build a weapon.

All that is stopping them is political sentiment and the risk of international sanctions. Both nations signed the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, but it is unclear how severely other countries would punish two of the world's largest economies for violating the agreement.

South Korea has 24 nuclear reactors and a huge stockpile of spent fuel from which it can extract plutonium — enough for more than 4,300 bombs, according to a 2015 paper by Charles D. Ferguson, president of the Federation of American Scientists.

Japan once pledged never to stockpile more nuclear fuel than it can burn off. But it has never completed the necessary recycling and has 10 tons of plutonium stored domestically and another 37 tons overseas.

“We keep reminding the Japanese of their pledge,” said Ernest J. Moniz, chief executive of the Nuclear Threat Initiative and an energy secretary in the Obama administration, noting that it would take years if not decades for Japan to consume its fissile material because almost all its nuclear plants have remained offline since the 2011 Fukushima accident.

China, in particular, has objected to Japan's stockpile, warning that its traditional rival is so advanced technologically that it could use the material to quickly build a large arsenal.

Analysts often describe Japan as a “de facto” nuclear state, capable of building a weapon within a year or two. “Building a physical device is not that difficult anymore,” said Tatsujiro Suzuki, former deputy chairman of the Japan Atomic Energy Commission.

Japan already possesses long-range missile technology, he added, but would need some time to develop more sophisticated communications and control systems.

South Korea may be even further along, with a fleet of advanced missiles that carry conventional warheads. In 2004, the government disclosed that its scientists had dabbled in reprocessing and enriching nuclear material without first informing the International Atomic Energy Agency as required by treaty.

“If we decide to stand on our own feet and put our resources together, we can build nuclear weapons in six months,” said Suh Kune-yull, a professor of nuclear engineering at Seoul National University. “The question is whether the president has the political will.”

In Seoul, a Rising Call for Arms

President Moon Jae-in has been firm in his opposition to nuclear weapons. He insists that building them or reintroducing American ones to South Korea would make it even more difficult to persuade North Korea to scrap its own.

Though Mr. Moon has received high approval ratings since his election in May, his view is increasingly a minority one.

Calls for nuclear armament used to be dismissed as chatter from South Korea's nationalist fringe. Not anymore. Now people often complain that South Korea cannot depend on the United States, its protector of seven decades.

The opposition Liberty Korea party called on the United States to reintroduce tactical nuclear weapons to South Korea in August after the North tested an intercontinental ballistic missile that appeared capable of reaching the mainland United States.

"If the U.N. Security Council can't rein in North Korea with its sanctions, we will have no option but to withdraw from the Nonproliferation Treaty," Won Yoo-chul, a party leader, said in September.

Given the failure of sanctions, threats and negotiations to stop North Korea, South Koreans are increasingly convinced the North will never give up its nuclear weapons. But they also oppose risking a war with a military solution.

Most believe the Trump administration, despite its tough talk, will ultimately acquiesce, perhaps settling for a freeze that allows the North to keep a small arsenal. And many fear that would mean giving the North the ultimate blackmail tool — and a way to keep the United States at bay.

"The reason North Korea is developing a hydrogen bomb and intercontinental ballistic missiles is not to go to war with the United States," said Cheong Seong-chang, an analyst at the Sejong Institute near Seoul. "It's to stop the Americans from intervening in armed skirmishes or full-scale war on the Korean Peninsula."

The closer the North gets to showing it can strike the United States, the more nervous South Koreans become about being abandoned. Some have asked whether Washington will risk the destruction of an American city by intervening, for example, if the North attempts to occupy a border island, as its soldiers have practiced.

For many in South Korea, the solution is a homegrown nuclear deterrent.

"If we don't respond with our own nuclear deterrence of some kind, our people will live like nuclear hostages of North Korea," said Cheon Seong-whun, a former presidential secretary for security strategy.

With nuclear weapons of its own, the South would gain leverage and could force North Korea back to the bargaining table, where the two sides could whittle down their arsenals through negotiations, some hawks argue.

But given the risks of going nuclear, others say Seoul should focus on persuading Washington to redeploy tactical nuclear weapons.

"The redeployment of American tactical nuclear weapons would be the surest way" to deter North Korea, Defense Minister Song Young-moo said last month, but he added that it would be difficult to get Washington to agree to that.

In Tokyo, Cautious Debate

The discussion in Japan has been more subdued than in South Korea, no surprise after 70 years of public education about the horrors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

But Japan has periodically considered developing nuclear weapons every decade since the 1960s.

In 2002, a top aide to Junichiro Koizumi, the prime minister then, caused a furor by suggesting Japan might one day break with its policy of never building, possessing or allowing nuclear arms on its territory.

North Korea has reopened that question.

Shigeru Ishiba, a former defense minister seen as a potential challenger to Prime Minister Abe, has argued that Japan needs to debate its nuclear policy given the threat from North Korea.

Mr. Abe has stopped short of calling for a re-evaluation of the country's position on nuclear weapons. But he has increased military spending and echoed Mr. Trump's hawkish position against the North.

Mr. Abe's administration has already determined that nuclear weapons would not be prohibited under the Constitution if maintained only for self-defense.

The Japanese public is largely opposed to nuclear weapons with polls indicating fewer than one in 10 support nuclear armament.

But Japan's relations with South Korea have long been strained, and if Seoul armed itself, those numbers could shift.

Some analysts say the discussion is aimed at getting additional reassurance from Washington. "We always do that when we become a little upset about the credibility of the extended U.S. deterrence," said Narushige Michishita, a professor at the National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies in Tokyo.

Tobias Harris, a Japan analyst at Teneo Intelligence, a political risk consultancy, said Japan would rethink its position on nuclear weapons if it suspects the United States would let it down.

"We're kind of in uncharted waters as far as this goes," he said. "It's hard to know exactly what the threshold is that will lead the Japanese public's switch to flip."

Correction: October 28, 2017

An earlier version of this article misstated the amount of plutonium Japan stores overseas. It is 37 tons, not 37 million tons.

A version of this article appears in print on October 29, 2017, on Page A1 of the New York edition with the headline: Allies Rattled by North Korea Rethink Options.

Where is the truth?

November 2, 2017

North Korea dismisses as ‘misinformation’ Japanese report that scores died in nuclear test site accident

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2017/11/02/asia-pacific/north-korea-dismisses-misinformation-japanese-report-scores-died-nuclear-test-site-accident/#.WftqnnADOos>

by Jesse Johnson

Staff Writer

North Korea lashed out at Japan on Thursday, dismissing as “misinformation” a report earlier this week that more than 200 people were feared dead after a tunnel collapse at the North’s main nuclear test site following the country’s sixth atomic test in early September.

Japan’s TV Asahi, citing unnamed sources in the isolated country, reported Tuesday that the accident at the Punggye-ri test site had killed scores around Sept. 10. The Japan Times could not independently confirm the report, but North Korea rarely acknowledges major accidents, and any incident related to its nuclear program would be especially taboo.

The North’s Korean Central News Agency claimed in a commentary Thursday that Japanese authorities had given their blessing to the report as part of a bid “to secure a pretext for sending the Japan ‘Self-Defense Forces’ into the Korean peninsula on their own initiative by building up the public opinion over [the] ‘nuclear threat’ from the DPRK.”

The commentary went on to urge “Japanese reactionaries” to “clearly understand the strategic position of the DPRK which has reached the highest stage, and face up to the situation and should refrain from going reckless by citing the DPRK as a pretext.”

It went on to threaten not only the Japanese government, but TV Asahi, as well.

“If catastrophic consequences beyond imagination are entailed by the shower of retaliatory fire, the TV Asahi will also be made to pay a dear price for its sordid act as it resorts to smear campaign.”

Experts have warned that the nuclear-armed country’s atomic tests at the Punggye-ri site, including its sixth and most powerful explosion — which Tokyo estimated had an explosive yield of 160 kilotons, more than 10 times the size of the Hiroshima bomb — may have destabilized the area and that it may not be usable for future tests.

The United States, Japan and others have urged North Korea to dismantle its nuclear weapons program, but the demand has fallen on deaf ears in Pyongyang, where leader Kim Jong Un has vowed to never give up his arsenal, calling it a “treasured sword” meant to protect the country from aggression.

Backpedalling or a success?

November 3, 2017

Japan’s adjusted anti-nuke resolution mirrors reality of security situation, U.S. envoy says

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2017/11/03/national/politics-diplomacy/japans-adjusted-anti-nuke-resolution-mirrors-reality-security-situation-u-s-envoy-says/#.Wfw28XaDOos>

Kyodo

NEW YORK – Japan’s recently adopted U.N. resolution calling for the total elimination of nuclear weapons better reflects today’s security concerns than previous versions, U.S. disarmament ambassador Robert Wood said Thursday.

“A majority of countries felt that that resolution reflected and was a snapshot of where we are today, what the threats are, and frankly, what the international community needs to do,” he told reporters at New York’s Foreign Press Center.

Wood said the adoption of the Japan-led resolution was a “big success,” despite criticism aimed at Tokyo by numerous countries for apparently backpedaling on nuclear disarmament when it came to the language used in the resolution.

A United Nations committee passed the annual resolution last week, but with significantly less support than in years past. It drew support from 144 countries, down 23 from last year.

Wood said it garnered support because it had a “strong condemnation of North Korea” for its nuclear and ballistic missile programs.

Pyongyang has raised alarm bells by conducting a spate of ballistic missile tests, as well as carrying out its sixth and largest underground nuclear test in September, prompting the U.N. Security Council to issue its most stringent sanctions resolution yet.

Additionally, Wood said the backing shows a “growing understanding that future disarmament has to be conditions-based, meaning that you can’t divorce nuclear disarmament from the prevailing security environment.”

In addition to touching upon the threats from the Korean Peninsula, he spoke of other global uncertainties posed by precarious situations in the Middle East, and by the actions of Russia and China, particularly in the South China Sea.

Against this backdrop, Wood also took aim at those who supported a U.N. treaty outlawing nuclear weapons that was adopted in July.

The treaty’s proponents have long been frustrated by what they see as inadequate efforts by the nuclear weapons states — Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States — to reduce their nuclear arsenals despite having signed onto the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty.

In addition to the five countries, Japan and other nations operating under the nuclear umbrella for security reasons, do not support the ban treaty and are currently unlikely to do so.

Wood described how ban supporters are operating in a “parallel universe,” and claimed that due to their stance, “they have basically said nuclear deterrence is obsolete.”

He said “the conditions are not ripe for nuclear disarmament at this point,” citing the increasing security threats, adding, “This ban treaty has been extremely divisive and it has no practical impact on nuclear disarmament.”

The Japan-led resolution will be put to a vote before a plenary session in the General Assembly in December. The resolution has been put forward for 24 years in a row.

N. Korea justifies itself

November 3, 2017

N.Korea justifies nuclear, missile programs

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20171103_07/

A senior official of North Korea's governing Workers' Party has justified its nuclear and missile programs ahead of US President Donald Trump's tour of Asia next week.

Kim Su Gil led a North Korean delegation that attended a ceremony to commemorate the centenary of Russia's October Revolution in the country's second largest city on Thursday.

Kim, chairman of the party's Pyongyang City Committee, gave a speech during the event in St. Petersburg. He said powerful forces are needed to thwart invasions and military provocations by the US.

He said the recent situation on the Korean Peninsula proves that North Korea's nuclear weapons are a strong deterrent against invasions and ploys of the US and its followers.

Also, North Korea issued a spokesperson's statement of an anti-US organization through its state-run media on Thursday.

The statement warns that the US administration must listen to opposition at home and abroad to its military option against North Korea. It adds that holding on to the "military gamble" will be self-destructive.

Trump will arrive in Japan on Sunday to begin his tour of Asia.

Ishiba on nuclear weapons again

November 6, 2017

Japan should be able to build nuclear weapons: ex-LDP Secretary-General Ishiba

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2017/11/06/national/japan-able-build-nuclear-weapons-ex-ldp-secretary-general-ishiba/#.WgC5xnaDOot>

Kyodo

Shigeru Ishiba, former secretary-general of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party, said Sunday that Japan should possess the capability to build nuclear weapons.

"Japan should have the technology to build a nuclear weapon if it wants to do so," the former defense minister said in a speech in Tokyo.

"But I don't take the position that Japan should have nuclear weapons," he said.

Noting that some of Japan's neighbors, such as Russia, China and North Korea, have nuclear weapons, Ishiba said, "If we don't have knowledge about nuclear weapons, we would not develop an awareness of how to defend ourselves against them."

Kawasaki of ICAN talks to students

November 8, 2017

ICAN member reaches out to Japanese students

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20171108_04/

A member of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons has called on Japanese college students to ponder what Japan can do to make a world free of nuclear arms. ICAN won this year's Nobel Peace Prize for its contribution to the adoption of a landmark UN treaty to ban nuclear weapons.

Akira Kawasaki is the only Japanese member of ICAN's international steering group. He spoke to about 350 students at Ritsumeikan University in Kyoto on Tuesday.

He explained how ICAN has been asking governments to support the treaty. He also told the students that survivors of the 1945 atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki have been sharing their experiences and are collecting signatures to promote the treaty.

Kawasaki said various civic movements collectively helped to change the mindset of possessing nuclear weapons and led to the treaty's adoption.

He noted that Japan is seeking the abolition of nuclear arms as the only country to have suffered atomic bombings, while depending on the US nuclear umbrella in the face of threats from North Korea.

Kawasaki urged the students to think about whether fear of the North's nuclear weapons can justify Japan's dependence on the nuclear umbrella.

More than 50 nations have signed the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. But it is opposed by all the nuclear powers and countries such as Japan that are under the nuclear umbrella.

Hiroshima Notes by Kenzaburo Oe

November 11, 2017

Hiroshima Notes': Kenzaburo Oe on Hiroshima and the U.S. Occupation

by Damian Flanagan

In 1963, 28-year-old novelist and rising star Kenzaburo Oe was sent to Hiroshima to report on the rancorous split between political groups calling for the abolition of nuclear weapons.

Hiroshima Notes, by Kenzaburo Oe.

192 pages

GROVE ATLANTIC, Nonfiction.

It would be the first of multiple visits to Hiroshima and an ongoing contemplation of the deep trauma the people of Hiroshima had endured in the 18 years since the nuclear Holocaust. Reflecting upon their misery and mistreatment gave Oe the strength to search for the light in his own personal moment of darkness when his first child was born with a severe head abnormality.

Both the American Occupation authorities and the local government had been concerned to paint an absurdly optimistic and censored picture of post-disaster Hiroshima. By the autumn of 1945, it was declared that all those expected to die from radiation had already died.

For 10 years there was scarcely any public discussion of the bomb — the local newspaper did not even have movable type for the words “atomic bomb” or “radioactivity.” Yet a profusion of victims continued to die from radioactivity and leukemia, and over 1,000 young women hid their scarred faces in shame in Hiroshima back rooms.

The stories Oe records, such as the 4-year-old boy exposed to the bomb in 1945 who died of leukemia 20 years later, and whose fiancée committed suicide two weeks after his death, speak powerfully of a community suffering enduring physical and psychological abuse. This book is Oe's plangent call for the true aftermath of Hiroshima to be eternally remembered.

Read archived reviews of Japanese classics at jtimes.jp/essential.

Nuclear weapons in Okinawa

November 14, 2017

Anti-nuclear group to call for probe into US bases

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20171114_06/

An anti-nuclear group will demand Japan's government to inspect US bases in Okinawa, following a report that a large number of nuclear weapons were once stored there.

An NHK documentary broadcast in September revealed that 1,300 nuclear weapons were kept in Okinawa during the height of the Cold War.

They were reportedly stored there before Okinawa was returned to Japanese rule.

The civic group, founded after the airing of the program, held a meeting in Okinawa's Kadena Town on Monday.

Members agreed to call on the Japanese government to inspect US bases in Okinawa, as well as to seek the release of information relating to weapons stored at these bases.

A member expressed hope that this would start a large movement seeking to find out what really happened.

Pope Francis clearly condemns nuclear deterrence

Pope Francis, in change from predecessors,
condemns nuclear arsenals for deterrence

By Philip Pullella, Reuters, Nov 10 2017

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-vatican-nuclear/pope-in-change-from-predecessors-condemns-nuclear-arsenals-for-deterrence-idUSKBN1DA161>

VATICAN CITY (Reuters) - Pope Francis appeared to harden the Catholic Church's teaching against nuclear weapons on Friday, saying countries should not stockpile them even for the purpose of deterrence. His remarks, at the start of a disarmament conference that brought 11 Nobel Peace Prize winners to the Vatican, appeared to go further than previous popes. They have said that while nuclear weapons should never be used, holding arsenals solely to deter other countries from using them could be morally acceptable as a step toward achieving a nuclear-free world.

Addressing the group in the 16th century frescoed Clementine Hall of the Vatican's Apostolic Palace, Francis spoke of "the catastrophic humanitarian and environmental effects of any employment of nuclear devices".

He added: "If we also take into account the risk of an accidental detonation as a result of error of any kind, the threat of their use, as well as their very possession, is to be firmly condemned."

As tensions between the United States and North Korea have increased, the pope has often warned that a nuclear conflict would destroy a good part of humanity and called for a third country to mediate the dispute.

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As tensions between the United States and North Korea have increased, the pope has often warned that a nuclear conflict would destroy a good part of humanity and called for a third country to mediate the dispute.

He also said international laws against proliferation of nuclear weapons had not kept new states from acquiring them. Money used to develop or modernize weapons should instead be spent on helping the poor and protecting the environment.

Douglas Roche, Canada's former Ambassador for Disarmament and a former senator, told the conference the pope's remarks against possession of nuclear weapons were "historic" and asked national conferences of Catholic bishops to work to make it known.

Another participant suggested the pope should write an encyclical letter addressed to all Catholics on the moral imperative to ban nuclear weapons.

Among those who met the pope were Beatrice Fihn, executive director of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) and Mohamed El Baradei, director general emeritus of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

Fihn, whose group won the Nobel this year, told Reuters she asked the pope to lead all 1.2 billion Catholics around the world in prayer for an end to the threat of nuclear weapons on Sunday, December 10, when her group is due to collect the prize.

"Tensions are really high and the risks for nuclear weapons' use is higher than at the height of the Cold War, the Cuban missile crisis. I think that's really serious and we need to urgently do something about this," she said.

El Baradei, who won the peace prize in 2015, was asked how he would respond to U.S. President Donald Trump's threat to use unprecedented "fire and fury" against North Korea if it threatened the United States.

"I go to pray," he said.

Negotiations on nukes? No way

November 18, 2017

North Korea rules out negotiations on nuclear weapons

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2017/11/18/asia-pacific/politics-diplomacy-asia-pacific/north-korea-rules-negotiations-nuclear-weapons/#.WhBDD3mDOos>

Reuters

GENEVA – North Korea on Friday ruled out negotiations with Washington as long as joint U.S-South Korea military exercises continue, and said that Pyongyang's atomic weapons program would remain as a deterrent against a U.S. nuclear threat.

In an interview, Han Tae Song, North Korea's ambassador to the United Nations in Geneva, brushed off the new sanctions that the Trump administration has said it is preparing, as well as the possibility of North Korea being added to a U.S. list of states sponsoring terrorism.

South Korea and the United States agreed on Friday to keep working for a peaceful end to the North Korean nuclear crisis, but a U.S. envoy said it was difficult to gauge the reclusive North's intentions as there has been "no signal."

Han, asked about those bilateral talks in Seoul, replied: "As long as there is continuous hostile policy against my country by the U.S. and as long as there are continued war games at our doorstep, then there will not be negotiations.

"There are continued military exercises using nuclear assets as well as aircraft carriers, and strategic bombers and then ... raising such kinds of military exercises against my country," he said.

He, who is ambassador to the U.N.'s Conference on Disarmament, was speaking at the North's mission in Geneva, where Pyongyang and Washington secured a 1994 nuclear deal that later collapsed.

He said he had no information on when North Korea might test a ballistic missile again, after the last one two months ago.

"The DPRK, my country, will continue to build-up its self-defense capability, the pivot of which is nuclear forces and capability for a triumphant ... strike as long as U.S. and hostile forces keep up nuclear threat and blackmail," Han said, using the acronym for the North's formal name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

"Our country plans ultimate completion of the nuclear force," he said.

China said Thursday that a "dual suspension" proposal to handle North Korea was still the best option, after U.S. President Donald Trump said he and Chinese President Xi Jinping had rejected a "freeze for freeze" agreement.

Han, asked about China's latest appeal for a freeze, said "the situation is far from those things."

Han said that U.S. administrations had "never accepted" halting joint military exercises, adding: "So if they accept such things, then we will think what we do in the future."

North Korea could not consider abandoning its nuclear program, he said, adding: "This is the deterrent, the nuclear deterrent to cope with the nuclear threat from America."

Han said that Trump was expected to announce further sanctions against North Korea.

Existing sanctions have constituted "large-scale human rights violations" that had delayed delivery of aid and consumer goods, he said.

"It is obvious that the aim of the sanctions is to overthrow the system of my country by isolating and stifling it and to intentionally bring about humanitarian disaster instead of preventing weapons development as claimed by the U.S. and its followers," he said.

Han, asked whether new U.S. sanctions were expected against North Korean individuals or financial structures, said: "The media is saying the Americans and Trump are considering such things.

"But that is their business and then we don't mind what they want to do against my country since the aim is quite clear.

"So we are ready for such kinds of measures taken by America against my country," he said.

US hoping to deploy nukes in Japan in 1960s (secret document)

November 19, 2017

Documents show U.S. mulled requesting deployment of nuclear weapons to Japan in 1960s

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2017/11/19/national/history/documents-show-u-s-mulled-requesting-deployment-nuclear-weapons-japan-1960s/#.WhGupnmDOos>

Kyodo

WASHINGTON – The U.S. government weighed its chances of convincing Tokyo in the late 1960s to allow the deployment of nuclear weapons in Japan if an East Asia crisis broke out, declassified documents showed Sunday.

The idea, which was never proposed because it was apparently considered to have a “very slight” chance of being accepted, offers a look into how Washington sought to expand its military footprint in the region after World War II and the Korean War.

The atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki had left the Japanese public with a strong aversion to nuclear weapons, with the prohibition of the possession, manufacture and introduction into Japanese territory of the weapons — first outlined in 1967 — coming to form the core of Japan’s nuclear policy.

The documents, dated June 26, 1969, are comprised of drafts of a joint communique by then-President Richard Nixon and Prime Minister Eisaku Sato.

The documents outlined the role of the U.S. military after the return of Okinawa to Japanese administration in 1972.

One of the drafts noted that if the two countries agreed that a “state of emergency existed in East Asia threatening imminent armed attack” on Japan, steps would be taken to “enable the U.S. forces in Japan to introduce the necessary forces and equipment to meet the danger.”

While the two countries eventually made a secret agreement allowing the introduction of nuclear weapons to the southern islands even after the handover, the documents reveal for the first time the U.S. government’s desire to locate part of its nuclear arsenal on Honshu, according to Masaaki Gabe, a professor at the University of the Ryukyus in Okinawa.

The draft, written by the U.S. State Department, is labeled as “including all of the points desired by the U.S. . . . whose chance of full acceptance by the GOJ (government of Japan) is very slight.”

Gabe obtained the previously top secret documents from the U.S. National Archives.

The documents also include a separate draft of the joint communique that the State Department saw as “possibly more acceptable” to Japan.

That draft included a secret agreement that should a crisis arise in the region, Japan’s foreign minister will promise to give “prompt and sympathetic consideration” to consent to requests to deploy the U.S. military on the mainland via the U.S. ambassador to Japan.

Under the agreement, U.S. forces would also be allowed to conduct military operations out of Japan if an emergency arose on the Korean Peninsula or in Taiwan without prior consultation with Tokyo, which it is obligated to do under the Japan-U.S. security treaty.

Conference on nuke disarmament in Hiroshima

November 27, 2017

Hiroshima hosts meeting on nuclear disarmament

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20171127_13/

An international conference on nuclear disarmament has begun in Hiroshima city, which was destroyed by an atom bomb at the end of the World War Two.

Delegates at the 2-day meeting will discuss disarmament and how to bridge the widening gap between nuclear and non-nuclear states.

Japan's Foreign Ministry is hosting the event. The delegates were welcomed by Fumio Kishida, an ex-foreign minister and chairman of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party's policy research council.

Kishida, who greenlighted the Hiroshima event, said disarmament will not progress without the involvement of nuclear-armed nations.

He said he hoped the meeting will be a stepping stone for countries to work together toward a world without nuclear weapons.

Global experts and intellectuals from Hiroshima and Nagasaki are taking part. Before the meeting, delegates visited the Peace Memorial Park and met survivors of the 1945 bombing.

The chasm between nuclear- and non-nuclear-armed nations has deepened since July when the UN General Assembly adopted the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

Japan has come under fire for not joining the treaty. The Japanese government is hoping to compile proposals for a preparatory session of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference in April next year.

Japan is the only country to have been A-bombed. With that in mind, the government says it wants to serve as a bridge between the two nuclear camps.

N.Korean missile vs. UN disarmament conference

November 29, 2017

Anger, anxiety at UN disarmament conference in wake of N. Korean missile launch

https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20171129/p2a/00m/0na/020000c#cxrecs_s

HIROSHIMA -- North Korea's intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) launch on Nov. 29 coincided with the opening of a United Nations nuclear disarmament conference here.

- **【Related】** N. Korea fires suspected ICBM capable of hitting US East Coast
- **【Related】** Japan, US to closely work with Seoul after N. Korea missile launch
- **【Related】** Hibakusha: A strong push for a world without nuclear weapons

Participants, which included government representatives and disarmament experts, as well as A-bomb survivors on hand to observe proceedings, heaped criticism on North Korea, while some worried that the launch would buttress atomic powers' nuclear deterrent rationale and sap strength from the disarmament movement.

Hiroshima Mayor Kazumi Matsui touched on the ICBM launch in his opening comments at the conference, stating, "I hope that, particularly with things as they are, we discuss matters coolly and properly." Next, U.N. Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs Izumi Nakamitsu stated that Pyongyang's nuclear weapons development was "harmful to the nuclear nonproliferation structure." Germany's Angela Kane, a former U.N. High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, noted that it had not been very long since North Korea last launched a missile, and that it could not be forgiven for the latest test. She further stated that the situation warranted an immediate response. She said that **the very fact a disarmament conference was being held in Hiroshima was a warning that such acts are impermissible.** Tomoyuki Mimaki, representative director of the Japan Confederation of A- and H-bomb Sufferers Organizations (Nihon Hidankyo), was on hand to hear the conference proceedings.

"Launching a missile just as the momentum for abolishing nuclear weapons is rising causes major damage and creates obstacles. It could prompt some to conclude that we need nuclear deterrence after all," said Mimaki, 75, touching on the July conclusion of the U.N. Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and the Oct. 6 announcement that the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) had won the Nobel Peace Prize.

Sarah Bitter, a 17-year-old high school student from California, told the Mainichi Shimbun that she had been surprised by the missile launch news, and that she thought the international community's response would be important. Furthermore, while there are many different views on defense among Americans, she hoped to take home and pass on the lessons she learned about peace and disarmament at the conference and in Hiroshima.

Sunao Tsuboi, the 92-year-old head of the Hiroshima Prefectural Confederation of A-Bomb Sufferers Organizations, spoke to the conference of his own experience in the atomic bombing of his city.

"I don't want just an end to using nuclear weapons, but also for people to think about ending all war," he said. Regarding the North Korean ICBM launch, Tsuboi said to reporters that he wanted to tell Pyongyang, "Can't you open your eyes?"

This year marks the 27th time a U.N. disarmament conference has been held in Japan, and it has become an almost annual event. The conference is set to run until Nov. 30, with discussions on the prospects for nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation in the wake of the adoption of the U.N. atomic arms ban treaty.

How to react to N. Korean missile?

November 30, 2017

Editorial: More diplomatic efforts needed to contain N. Korean crisis

<https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20171130/p2a/00m/0na/012000c>

North Korea launched its first ballistic missile in two and a half months during the early hours of Nov. 29. The missile came down in an area within Japan's exclusive economic zone approximately 250 kilometers from Aomori Prefecture. The latest launch should be taken as an indication that the North Korean crisis has entered a new phase.

- **【Related】** N. Korea says it successfully tested new missile
- **【Related】** N. Korea launches ICBM in possibly its longest-range test yet
- **【Related】** Abe vows to maximize pressure on N. Korea after missile launch

The missile was launched on a "lofted" trajectory, which allows missiles to fly at a steep angle. The missile's distance can be contained this way as it flies to trace an arc. Its highest altitude topped 4,000 kilometers -- a first for a North Korean missile -- with the distance traveled reaching nearly 1,000 kilometers. It also flew for over 50 minutes.

Pyongyang later announced that the missile was a Hwasong-15 -- a new type of intercontinental ballistic missile that could reach the entire U.S. mainland. If launched on a standard trajectory, the missile range could reach an estimated 13,000 kilometers, meaning that it could cover Washington D.C. and New York. North Korean leader Kim Jong Un personally witnessed the latest launch and said a historic success was made for his country in completing its nuclear armament. While what he meant precisely remains unknown, if he declared that the North now has the capability to attack the United States with nuclear weapons, the degree of the ongoing crisis has significantly increased.

North Korea has been rushing to develop nuclear weapons and missiles to obtain deterrence against the U.S. The reason for the North to disregard objections even from its patron China could suggest that Pyongyang is desperate as it believes the only way to maintain its current regime is to acquire nuclear armament.

The North seeks to negotiate with the United States as a nuclear power on an equal footing. Kim's latest remark could be viewed as a strategic move to start such negotiations with Washington.

Some experts in the U.S. argue that the country has no choice but to allow North Korea to have nuclear weapons. Such an argument derives from the nuclear deterrence theory, in which nuclear powers keep each other in check so that neither of them would actually use nuclear weapons, or an understanding that Washington just needs to prevent the North from deploying intercontinental ballistic missiles that target the U.S. mainland.

However, Japan cannot accept such a situation because it could mean that Japan and South Korea would remain under a nuclear threat. If doubts emerge whether the U.S. would prepare itself for a possible nuclear attack on its own soil by North Korea to protect Japan and South Korea, it could shake Washington's alliance with Tokyo and Seoul.

What Japan can do on its own is limited, but it cannot just stand idly by. In cooperation with the U.S. and South Korea, Japan needs to approach China and Russia to tighten the net around the North to give up its nuclear weapons program. Tokyo is urged to be fully committed to make diplomatic efforts to prevent the crisis from worsening even further.

Nuclear deterrence?

December 3, 2017

ICAN official urges Japan to join anti-nuke weapons treaty

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201712030021.html>

THE ASAHI SHIMBUN

GENEVA--An executive of the international nongovernmental organization that won this year's Nobel Peace Prize vowed to strengthen the campaign to ask Japan and other countries to sign and ratify the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

Beatrice Fihn, 35, executive director of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), also said that her group will use the Nobel Peace Prize award money to establish a new fund to promote its activities.

She made those remarks in an interview with The Asahi Shimbun here on Dec. 1 ahead of the awards ceremony to be held Dec. 10 in Oslo.

ICAN, based in Geneva, was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in October on the grounds that it advocated the inhumanity of nuclear weapons and contributed to the adoption of the treaty in July.

In the interview, **Fihn pointed out that the Japanese government's stance of relying on the U.S. nuclear umbrella means that it supports the idea of threatening other countries with nuclear weapons.**

She cast doubts on that stance, saying **ICAN will ask Japanese politicians and people the serious question of whether Japan is accepting the idea of threatening to do the same thing to others as what happened to Hiroshima and Nagasaki at the end of World War II.**

Amid North Korea's ongoing development of nuclear weapons and missiles, Fihn said, "With the threats, we no longer have to convince people that the threat is real. People are feeling it. They know it's real. So I think we have a unique opportunity now to really make progress.

"I think when we're thinking about the humans or putting humans first, that's when we make progress ... Not 'America First,' (but) humans first."

The signing of the treaty started in September but only three countries have ratified it.

Ratification of 50 countries is necessary for the treaty to take effect, which ICAN is aiming to realize within two years. For that purpose, it plans to set up a new fund within ICAN.

The group named it the "1,000-day fund" so that it can achieve the ratification of 50 countries within 1,000 days from Dec. 10, the day of the awards ceremony.

In addition to the prize money of 9 million Swedish kronor (about 120 million yen, or \$1.1 million), ICAN will collect donations for the fund.

The fund will be used to support activities of cooperating groups throughout the world so that they can promote their campaigns to urge the governments and the people of their countries to sign and ratify the treaty.

Fihn harbors strong doubts on the "nuclear deterrence" that Japan is relying on, saying that it will be unable to stop accidents from occurring due to misunderstandings, cyberattacks or individuals that aren't rational.

"Nuclear deterrence isn't flawless. Even if it does work to some extent, it can still fail and the consequences would be devastating," she said.

As Foreign Minister Taro Kono says, the Japanese government asserts that nuclear weapons are necessary to deter North Korea.

However, Fihn said that **the mechanism to create peace and stability based on fear of nuclear weapons is not working and, on the contrary, is creating an unstable situation.**

“Introducing nuclear weapons in a conflict situation makes it more tense and increases the risk of an accident where these weapons will actually be used,” she said.

(This article was written by correspondents Tsutomu Ishiai and Ichiro Matsuo.)

How to protect yourself from nuclear attack or explosion

December 6, 2017

Chinese near North Korean border told how to survive a nuclear attack

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2017/12/06/asia-pacific/chinese-near-north-korean-border-told-survive-nuclear-attack/#.WiffyHmDOos>

Reuters

BEIJING – The official state-run newspaper in northeastern China’s city of Jilin, near the border with North Korea, on Wednesday published a page of “common-sense” advice on how readers can protect themselves from a nuclear attack or explosion.

China has voiced grave concern over North Korea’s nuclear and missiles program, as well as calling on the United States and South Korea to stop provoking Pyongyang.

U.S. bombers were to fly over the Korean Peninsula on Wednesday as part of a large-scale joint military drills with South Korea. The North has warned that the drills would push the Korean Peninsula to the “brink of war.”

The full-page article in the Jilin Daily, which does not mention possible attacks by North Korea or any other country, explains how nuclear weapons differ from traditional arms and instructs people how to protect themselves in the event of an attack.

Nuclear weapons have five means of causing destruction, the article explained: light radiation, blast waves, early stage nuclear radiation, nuclear electromagnetic pulses and radioactive pollution. It said the first four kill instantly.

People who find themselves outside during a nuclear attack should try to lie in a ditch, cover exposed skin in light-colored clothing or dive into a river or lake to try to minimize the possibility of instantaneous death, it said.

Cartoon illustrations of ways to dispel radioactive contamination were also provided, such as using water to wash off shoes and using cotton buds to clean ears, as well as a picture of a vomiting child to show how medical help can be sought to speed the expulsion of radiation through stomach pumping and induced urination.

The paper also provided historical context, saying that when the United States dropped a nuclear bomb on Hiroshima in 1945, light radiation and the blast wave caused fires and storm winds that destroyed 81 percent of the buildings in the city, killing over 70,000 people.

North Korea last week tested what it called its most advanced intercontinental ballistic missile, which could reach all of the United States.

U.S. President Donald Trump has warned he would destroy the North Korean regime if it threatened the United States with nuclear weapons.

China has rejected military intervention and called for an end to the war of words between Washington and Pyongyang.

Beijing fears an outbreak of conflict or a chaotic collapse of the North Korean regime, which might see fighting or waves of refugees cross the border into China.

Where should Japan stand?

December 5, 2017

Editorial: Anxious Japan must be bridge-builder between nuclear, non-nuclear states

<https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20171205/p2a/00m/0na/011000c>

Nov. 29, the date of North Korea's most recent missile launch, was also the opening day of the 27th United Nations Conference on Disarmament Issues in Hiroshima. It was a microcosm of Japan's present situation: in favor of the absolute abolition of nuclear arms, and deeply troubled by the threat presented by North Korea. The missile test highlighted once again Japan's worries as the only nation on Earth to have been attacked with nuclear weapons.

- **【Related】** UN adopts Japan's nuke abolition motion, but support down
- **【Related】** Anger, anxiety at UN disarmament conference in wake of N. Korean missile launch
- **【Related】** Hibakusha: A strong push for a world without nuclear weapons

Another ingredient in Japan's anxiety is the U.N. Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons agreed on in July this year by a majority of the world's nations. Japan, though it suffered the horrors of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki A-bombings, was not among them.

Along with other countries protected by the U.S. nuclear umbrella, Japan was not even at the negotiating table.

If Japan did join the ban treaty, it would "harm the legitimacy of the U.S. nuclear deterrent. This risks sending the wrong message to North Korea," Foreign Minister Taro Kono stated, summing up Japan's current position.

However, during his historic May 2016 visit to Hiroshima, then U.S. President Barack Obama himself renewed a vow to seek a nuclear-free world. Not just "hibakusha" A-bomb survivors, but many other figures questioned Kono's recent comment, and Japan's position on nuclear disarmament is now an object of severe doubt both inside and outside the country.

It would be best for Japan to become a bridge between nuclear and non-nuclear states.

However, there was not a single panelist representing the U.S. government at the two-day U.N. conference in Hiroshima, which is troubling. Previous disarmament conferences were attended by senior U.S. State Department officials, who also helped direct the discussions.

There were also no representatives of the British or French governments at the latest gathering, giving the impression of obstinance among the nuclear-armed powers opposing the U.N. atomic weapons ban treaty. Performing that bridging role would be no easy task.

Meanwhile, the participation of two delegates from China -- which had not attended the conference for many years possibly due to Beijing's tough line on relations with Japan -- was a real bright spot.

The disarmament conferences, propelled primarily by the U.N. office concerned and Japan's Foreign Ministry, among other organizations, are essentially undertaken with a deep sense of purpose. Just before this year's edition, the Foreign Ministry-backed Group of Eminent Persons for Substantive Advancement of Nuclear Disarmament also met in Hiroshima, and we have high hopes for the proposals discussed. What worries us is that we did not see much in-depth discussion at the latest disarmament conference. How are the nuclear arms ban treaty and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) to be harmonized with each other? The 2015 NPT Review Conference ended in discord, but can the 2020 edition be guided firmly and determinedly to a successful conclusion?

There are many points to debate. The threat of nuclear weapons and the shaky foundations of the non-proliferation system are causing global instability. In this situation, the usual exchange of opinions will not suffice. Rather, we need serious talks on how to break through the current crisis deadlock. Going forward, we would like to see Japan clearly define its role of urging constructive discussion. That is the position of the only country on Earth to have suffered a nuclear attack.

UN undersecretary in North Korea

December 6, 2017

Recognition as nuclear power a premise for N. Korea to sit for dialogue

<https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20171206/p2a/00m/0na/017000c>

United Nations Undersecretary-General for Political Affairs Jeffrey Feltman arrived in North Korea on Dec. 5 for a meeting with North Korean Foreign Minister Ri Yong Ho and other officials, after Pyongyang reportedly requested a dialogue with the United Nations. Behind the North's move apparently lies its conclusion that there are limits to its efforts to appeal its position to the international community through China and Russia, both long-time close allies of the North, as the two neighbors are stepping up their sanctions against Pyongyang.

- **【Related】** Senior UN official in North Korea to meet top leaders
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Yoon Hong-seok, a visiting professor at Myongji University in South Korea, who is versed in North Korean politics and foreign policy, said, "North Korea is seeking a dialogue with the United States after being recognized, even if not officially, as a nuclear power. The North may explain its position to the U.N. undersecretary general and ask him to act as a mediator between Pyongyang and Washington." While North Korea recently pressed ahead with the launch of a Hwasong-15 intercontinental ballistic missile, it has also shown a certain positive stance toward having a dialogue with the U.S. and other countries. According to Russian media reports, Kim Yong Nam, chairman of the Standing Committee of the Supreme People's Assembly of North Korea, told a group of legislators from the Russian Duma during their visit to North Korea in late November that "With the successful launch of a Hwasong-15 missile, we have achieved our goal toward becoming a nuclear power." Kim also emphasized, "We are ready to sit at the dialogue table. But for that, we need to be recognized as a nuclear power first."

North Korea has heretofore reiterated its position in the United Nations. During the general debate of the U.N. General Assembly and at U.N. committee meetings, the North Korean ambassador to the U.N. has justified his country's nuclear and missile development programs, stating that they are aimed at self-defense against the nuclear threat posed by the United States. In October, North Korea resent a letter to U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres stating that U.N. Security Council resolutions for sanctions against Pyongyang are illegal, after the world body, as the North claims, "failed to reply" to its earlier letter.

In the letter, North Korea specifically condemns the "illegitimacy" of the U.N. Security Council resolutions in light of the U.N. Charter, claiming that the resolutions prohibit the autonomous right of each country to the peaceful use of cosmic space. The letter also calls for the convening of an international conference for legal experts to discuss the matter.

On Sept. 20, North Korean Ambassador to the United Nations in Geneva Han Tae Song reported during a meeting of the U.N. Committee on the Rights of the Child that the anti-North sanctions are causing harm to children's education and livelihoods in North Korea, calling for the sanctions to be lifted.

Through talks with U.N. Undersecretary General Feltman, Pyongyang apparently aims to expound its position once again that the nuclear and missile development programs are aimed at self-defense, and is expected to highlight the "inhumane nature" of anti-North sanctions by taking Feltman to places where "humanitarian damage" from those sanctions is evident.

See also : <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2017/12/06/asia-pacific/politics-diplomacy-asia-pacific/u-n-officials-visit-north-korea-may-set-stage-talks-nuclear-issue/>

ICAN: "Change is possible"

December 6, 2017

Abolishing nuclear weapons could progress 'really quickly': Nobel winner

AFP-JIJI

GENEVA – Anti-nuclear campaigners preparing to receive the Nobel Peace Prize next weekend expect a new treaty banning nuclear weapons to help quickly consign the bomb to history.

In an interview ahead of the December 10 award ceremony, Beatrice Fihn, head of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), said that attitudes to other weapons and harmful behaviors had changed overnight after bans were introduced.

Even with the current standoff between the United States and North Korea creating the world's most acute nuclear threat in decades, Fihn said that the rapid abolition of the weapons was "very realistic."

ICAN, which for the past decade has been sounding the alarm over the dangers posed by nuclear weapons, secured a significant victory in July when the United Nations adopted a new treaty outlawing them.

That treaty, which was signed by 122 countries despite stark opposition from the nuclear powers, could take years to take effect, but Fihn said it was already having an impact on opinions toward the weapons.

Sitting in ICAN's cramped office in Geneva, Fihn, a Swedish national, pointed to the rapid shift in attitudes toward smoking indoors as an example.

"We didn't sit around and wait for the smokers to quit. We banned it inside, and they had to go outside if they wanted to keep smoking," she said.

"Now, it seems laughable to think that we used to sit in offices and smoke. That was so crazy," Fihn said, adding, "I think it could be like that with nuclear weapons as well."

"Suddenly, it just goes really, really quickly. Ten years later, we can't imagine we ever (accepted) that."

Fihn said the nuclear ban treaty and ICAN's Nobel award, coupled with a sense of urgency created by the growing nuclear threat, had created "a window of opportunity" to shift attitudes toward nuclear weapons.

Her comments came amid mounting tensions over Pyongyang's weapons program and fear that U.S. President Donald Trump is considering military action against North Korea that could unleash a nuclear war.

The situation is "obviously extremely concerning," Fihn said, warning that the conflict was pushing militaries to prepare for action, thus raising "the risk of an accident or a miscalculation."

"There is going to be an end, but we can choose if we want to end nuclear weapons or if we want nuclear weapons to end us," she said.

Trump's inflammatory rhetoric and impulsive behavior have sparked debate about how safe it is to give a U.S. president the exclusive power to decide if and when nuclear weapons should be deployed.

Fihn, who has not shied away from denouncing Trump's nuclear bravado, emphasized that it was the weapons, not the man, which were the main problem.

"I think if you are worried about Donald Trump having access to nuclear weapons and having the ability to . . . pretty much end the world, you are probably worried about nuclear weapons," she said.

She laughed off the assertion by the world's nine nuclear-armed states that the weapons help deter conflicts and promote peace.

"The big problem with deterrence theory is this idea that if we just threaten with more murder, more slaughtering of people, with more indiscriminate killing, somehow peace will prevail," Fihn said.

It is about time, she said, to stop treating nuclear weapons like a "magic power tool that some countries have to feel more important."

Instead, **they should be treated with the abhorrence worthy of the weapons of mass destruction they are, capable of killing hundreds of thousands of civilians.**

Fihn voiced frustration that nuclear-armed states frequently label efforts to ban the weapons as "naive."

"I think it is rather the opposite. It is naive to think that nine states can have (nuclear weapons) while the rest of the world doesn't," she said.

“The naive position is to think that we can have 15,000 nuclear weapons and that they will never, ever be used.”

Fihn said she felt her organization and the hundreds of anti-nuclear groups it helps coordinate around the world had already achieved an incredible feat.

“The most amazing thing about this campaign is that we’re just a bunch of random people who got together and wanted to do something,” she said.

“The biggest countries in the world, the most militarily powerful countries, the richest countries, have been trying to stop this and actively worked against us, and we did it anyway.”

“We hope this will serve as inspiration for others to get active and mobilize, against nuclear weapons and other issues.”

“Change is possible.”

Hibakusha traveling to Oslo

Hibakusha to attend Nobel Peace Prize ceremony

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20171208_18/

Two senior members of a group of Japanese atomic bomb survivors are traveling to Norway to attend the Nobel Peace Prize presentation ceremony.

The winner of this year's prize, The International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, or ICAN, invited the 2 hibakusha to Sunday's ceremony in Oslo.

Terumi Tanaka and Toshiki Fujimori of Nihon Hidankyo, the Japan Confederation of Atomic and Hydrogen Bomb Sufferers Organizations, left Narita Airport on Friday.

Tanaka said he wants to tell the world about the dangers of exposure to atomic explosions, and to urge all nations to join the UN treaty to ban nuclear weapons.

Fujimori said that winning the Peace Prize is a significant achievement, and he is excited about attending the ceremony. He said he will work with other hibakusha and ICAN to realize a nuclear-free world.

Tanaka and Fujimori will also attend a meeting hosted by ICAN.

On Thursday, 20 hibakusha, aged 71 to 93, left Japan to watch the ceremony in a public viewing area in Oslo. They will join ICAN members in a parade to appeal for the abolition of nuclear weapons.

Nuclear disarmament: Who will relay the message?

December 8, 2017

Disappearing 'hibakusha' the biggest challenge faced by nuclear disarmament conferences

The view of the Motoyasu River from Heiwa Bridge in Hiroshima is spectacular. Bronze-colored water can be seen flowing along a gradual curve. The sight reminds me personally of the Tigris River in Baghdad, but perhaps this is mainly because I was based in the Middle East as a foreign correspondent.

- 【Hibakusha Series】
- 【Atomic Bomb Spotlight】

However, the comparison does not just arise from the fact I happened to work in Iraq. There are tragic similarities. The hellish war-torn scenes along the Tigris River are comparable, to an extent, to the situation along the Motoyasu River in 1945 -- in the aftermath of the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima. If you walk across Heiwa Bridge, you will find the International Conference Center on your right. You will also be able to see Peace Memorial Park, where in May 2016 then U.S.

President Barack Obama delivered a resounding speech. Where has the golden "quiet enthusiasm" that resonated so powerfully from Obama's speech gone to now?

Since the administration of President Donald Trump took over from Obama in January 2017, the promising momentum toward Obama's vision of a "nuclear-free world" seems to have bled away. The climate in Japan has changed as well. However, the wishes and drive of the atomic bomb survivors (hibakusha) are as strong as ever.

In August 1945, Sunao Tsuboi, the now 92-year-old head of the Hiroshima branch of the Japan Confederation of A- and H-Bomb Sufferers Organizations (Nihon Hidankyo), was flung 10 to 20 meters by the A-bomb shockwave. His trousers and shirt were completely burned. A dust cloud hung over the ground, making it impossible to see more than 100 meters. A female university student had lost her eyes. What on earth was happening?

Having torn off his charred clothes, Tsuboi wandered around until he ran out of energy near Miyuki Bridge about 2 kilometers south of Heiwa Bridge. Desperate to leave some kind of legacy, he picked up a pebble and carved the words "Tsuboi died here" into the pavement. That's where his memory cuts off.

In late November 2017, 72 years after the bomb, Tsuboi attended the opening session of the 27th United Nations Japan Conference on Disarmament Issues in Hiroshima. From his wheelchair, he spoke about his personal experiences of the nuclear attack to people from all over the globe.

To date, Tsuboi has been overseas 21 times, despite cancer and heart disease. He has even been to North Korea twice, campaigning for the abolition of nuclear weapons. He has an ardent desire for humankind to return to the way it was before the bomb.

After finishing his talk in November, Tsuboi left the podium, waving and expressing his gratitude to the attendees. He received a huge round of applause that seemed to go on forever. Perhaps the crowd felt as though they had just been given a huge pile of homework.

As for me, I have been attending nearly every conference on disarmament organized by the United Nations and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the past 10-plus years. Listening to the hibakusha statements as well as analyses by peace activists and researchers is very educational for me.

However, **if you compare expert analyses with the first-hand recollections of the hibakusha, it can sometimes feel as though the latter is akin to a powerful musical performance, while the former is like a dull critique of a musical performance.** It is at times like this that I recall the sentiment of literary critic Hideo Kobayashi, who spoke about how there are beautiful 'flowers,' but there is no such thing as the beauty of a 'flower.' This makes me wonder, how can the powerful message of the 'flowers' be relayed

after they have passed away? This is the biggest challenge faced by nuclear disarmament conferences. (By Hiroshi Fuse, Expert Senior Writer)

Hiroshima piano will play in Oslo

December 9, 2017

Piano that survived Hiroshima A-bomb to play at Nobel Peace Prize event in Oslo

https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20171209/p2a/00m/0na/003000c#cxrecs_s

A piano once hit with the flash of the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima will be played at a concert to be held after the Nobel Peace Prize Award Ceremony in Oslo, Norway on Dec. 10.

- **【Hibakusha Series】**
- **【Related】** A-bombed cities' mayors invited to Nobel Peace Prize ceremony
- **【Related】** 3 A-bomb survivors to attend Nobel Peace Prize ceremony in Dec.

The so-called "hibaku (A-bombed) piano" is owned by second-generation A-bomb survivor, or "hibakusha," Mitsunori Yagawa, a 65-year-old piano tuner living in Hiroshima's Asaminami Ward. He hopes that "by having the world hear the sound unchanged from 72 years ago, it will make them consider nuclear issues with more familiarity" through the Oslo performance.

The concert is planned for Dec. 11 and will be put on by the Nobel Prize Committee. Akira Kawasaki, a member of the international steering group for the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), a prize recipient, suggested the performance and asked Yagawa to play.

The piano owned by Yagawa was made in 1938 by a predecessor of today's Yamaha Corp. and was found in a residence in Ujina, now part of Hiroshima's Minami Ward. Having been only 3 kilometers from the center of the blast, the piano's sides are scarred from flying shards of glass. Yagawa began playing the piano scarred by the bomb at recitals all over Japan after it was brought to the piano repair studio run out of his home 20 years ago. So far, Yagawa has tuned and held at least a hundred recitals with the piano. In addition to the piano that will be used during the concert, Yagawa has collected five "hibaku pianos." Each of them has been restored using as many of the original parts as possible in order to "convey the atmosphere at the time and the memories of the people who played them."

Yagawa's father, who had experienced the bomb near the epicenter, never once spoke about it during his life. Many of the piano donors also placed their hopes in the instruments to continue telling their experiences once they were gone. This led Yagawa to feel that tuning and playing the pianos was a peace movement that only he could undertake.

"Even in Oslo, I want the piano to overcome the barriers of the listeners' hearts and deliver a message of peace," Yagawa says.

"The end of nuclear weapons or the end of us"

December 10, 2017

Nobel laureate: If atomic bombs exist, disaster inevitable

<https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20171210/p2g/00m/0in/028000c>

OSLO, Norway (AP) -- As long as atomic bombs exist, a disaster is inevitable, the head of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, the winner of this year's Nobel Peace Prize, said Saturday.

- **【Related】** A-bomb survivor urges N. Korea, U.S. to never use nuclear weapons
- **【Hibakusha Series】**

"We are facing a clear choice right now: The end of nuclear weapons or the end of us," Beatrice Fihn told a news conference at the Norwegian Nobel Committee.

"An impulsive tantrum, a calculated military escalation, a terrorist or cyberattack or a complete accident -- we will see the use of nuclear weapons unless they are eliminated," she warned.

"These weapons do not make us safe, they are not a deterrent, they only spur other states to pursue their own nuclear weapons. And if you are not comfortable with Kim Jong-un having nuclear weapons, then you are not comfortable with nuclear weapons. If you're not comfortable with Donald Trump having nuclear weapons, then you are not comfortable with nuclear weapons," Fihn said.

ICAN, which brings together more than 450 organizations, was a driving force behind an international treaty on banning nuclear weapons that was passed this year. So far, 53 countries have signed up, but only three have ratified it -- the treaty needs ratification by 50 to go into effect.

No nuclear power has signed the treaty. Three major nuclear powers -- the United States, Britain and France -- have said they will not send their ambassadors to Sunday's Nobel prize-awarding ceremony in the Norwegian capital.

Satsuko Thurlow, a survivor of the Hiroshima atomic bombing who is to accept the prize along with Fihn, said she was "not too surprised" at the diplomatic snub.

"This is not the first time they have behaved that way ... they tried in many different ways to sabotage, to discredit, what we tried to do," she said. "Maybe this shows they are really annoyed at what success we have had so far."

ICAN on Saturday installed 1,000 red paper cranes outside the Norwegian Parliament. The cranes were made by children in Hiroshima, site of the world's first atomic bomb attack in 1945.

ICAN chief, A-bomb survivor condemn nuclear arms

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20171210_05/

An atomic bomb survivor and the head of the nuclear disarmament campaign that won this year's Nobel Peace Prize have spoken out against the use of nuclear weapons.

They held a news conference in Oslo, Norway, on Saturday, one day before the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, or ICAN, will receive the Nobel honor at an awards ceremony.

ICAN won the prize for its contribution to the adoption in July of a landmark UN treaty to ban nuclear arms.

ICAN's Executive Director Beatrice Fihn said abolishing nuclear arms is the only rational choice and that eliminating them begins with the treaty.

Fihn said government leaders have to create a new foreign policy that does not rely on such illegal weapons of mass destruction. She added the leaders must sign the treaty.

Setsuko Thurlow experienced the atomic bombing of Hiroshima in 1945 when she was 13 years old. Eight of her relatives died in the attack. She now lives in Canada.

She called for the international community to pursue a diplomatic solution to the rising tensions surrounding North Korea's nuclear and missile development.

Thurlow said that no matter what happens, nuclear weapons must never be used as they could kill millions of people.

Thurlow touched on an objection to the UN treaty by Japan, which is the only country to have experienced atomic bombings.

She noted it is arrogant not to listen to advocates of the treaty and that Japan lacks consistency despite its insistence that it is a pacifist nation.

Thurlow and Fihn are scheduled to give speeches at the Nobel awards ceremony.

A-bomb survivors in Oslo

December 11, 2017

A-bomb survivor speaks at Nobel Prize ceremony

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20171211_01/

At the Nobel Peace Prize award ceremony in Oslo, Norway on Sunday, an atomic bomb survivor has urged all nations to forever eradicate the threat of nuclear annihilation.

The International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, also known as ICAN, was awarded this year's prize.

ICAN Executive Director Beatrice Fihn and A-bomb survivor Setsuko Thurlow received the medal and certificate. Thurlow, who lives in Canada, has worked with ICAN.

Addressing the ceremony, Fihn asked, "Will it be the end of nuclear weapons, or will it be the end of us."

She urged all nations to join the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons to outlaw weapons of mass destruction.

Next, Thurlow spoke about her experience of surviving the atomic bombing of Hiroshima at the age of 13. She recalled how her beloved 4-year-old nephew transformed into an unrecognizable chunk of flesh.

Thurlow stressed that nuclear weapons are the ultimate evil that only bring about devastation. She criticized nuclear powers that are against the UN treaty, and nations under the "nuclear umbrella", for being what she deemed an integral part of a system of violence that is endangering humankind.

She called on the international community to never give up, and keep moving toward nuclear disarmament, despite mounting tensions in the world.

When the two women ended their speeches, the audience responded with an extended ovation.

The ambassadors of the United States, Russia and other major nuclear-armed countries did not attend the ceremony, demonstrating their governments' rejection of the treaty.

Their absence revealed the harsh reality surrounding the global issue of nuclear disarmament.

A-bomb survivors express sense of accomplishment

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20171211_08/

Survivors of the 1945 atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, who attended the Nobel Peace Prize award ceremony, said they will continue to pursue a world without nuclear weapons.

Setsuko Thurlow delivered a speech on Sunday at the award ceremony for this year's peace prize winner, the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, or ICAN. Thurlow has worked with ICAN.

She and 2 other atomic bombing survivors, Terumi Tanaka and Toshiki Fujimori of Nihon Hidankyo, the Japan Confederation of A- and H-Bomb Sufferers Organizations, spoke to reporters later in the day.

Thurlow said she has worked to abolish nuclear weapons for many years and that she was satisfied and felt a sense of achievement at the applause her speech received.

She said the number of people who share her views appears to have grown.

Thurlow says she hopes people in countries opposed to the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons will accept their message and sincerely consider taking part in their movement.

She said that along with the joy at ICAN 's peace prize, she feels a heavy responsibility to keep working to eliminate nuclear weapons.

Thurlow urged Japan and other nations under the "nuclear umbrella" to change their opposition to the nuclear ban treaty.

She said Japan appears to be drawing closer to the United States and that the possibility of Japan strengthening its military capabilities makes her shudder with fright.

The atomic bombing survivor said she hopes Japan's government and people will step up the dialogue to abolish nuclear weapons.

Tanaka said he feels that the aspirations of people who share the hope of banning nuclear weapons and creating a world without them is being realized. He said he feels that his group's activities have been widely recognized.

Fujimori said that the speeches given by ICAN Executive Director Beatrice Fihn and Thurlow touched people's hearts. He said he hopes the peace prize will spur further efforts to achieve a world without nuclear weapons.

Quotes from Oslo

<https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/editors/5/nobelpeaceprozeawardpart1/>

<https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/editors/5/nobelpeaceprozeawardpart2/>

<https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/nhknewslines/quotesoftheday/20171211/>

"These weapons are not a necessary evil; they are the ultimate evil. Our light now is the ban treaty. To all in this hall and all listening around the world, I repeat those words that I heard called to me in the ruins of Hiroshima: 'Don't give up! Keep pushing! See the light? Crawl towards it.' "

- Setsuko Thurlow, atomic bomb survivor, giving a speech at the Nobel Peace Prize award ceremony. She had campaigned with this year's winner, the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, an NGO which worked towards the landmark UN treaty banning nuclear arms.

<https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/nhknewslines/quotesoftheday/2017121101/>

"The Nobel Prize is an idea that, in times like these, helps us to think beyond our dividing walls, that reminds us of what we must struggle for together, as human beings. It's the sort of idea mothers will tell their small children, as they always have, all around the world, to inspire them and to give themselves hope. Am I happy to receive this honour? Yes, I am."

- Kazuo Ishiguro, Nobel Laureate in Literature. The Japanese-born British author was presented with his award at a ceremony in Sweden.

<https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/nhknewslines/quotesoftheday/2017120802/>

"Many of my fellow survivors who were working internationally for the abolishment of nuclear weapons have passed away. I will be carrying on their legacy when I attend the ceremony."

-Terumi Tanaka of Nihon Hidankyo, a group representing hibakusha, survivors of the 1945 atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Two representatives have been invited by ICAN to take part in the Nobel Peace Prize ceremony on Sunday.

Setsuko Thurlow: Keep crawling towards the light

Nobel Peace Prize speech by ICAN campaigner, Hiroshima survivor Setsuko Thurlow

https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20171211/p2a/00m/0na/005000c#cxrecs_s

The following is a speech delivered by Setsuko Thurlow, a survivor of the August 1945 atomic bombing of Hiroshima, on behalf of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), winner of the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize, as released by the Nobel Foundation.

- **【Related】** Nuclear weapon ban campaigners receive Nobel Peace Prize
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Your Majesties,

Distinguished members of the Norwegian Nobel Committee,

My fellow campaigners, here and throughout the world,

Ladies and gentlemen,

It is a great privilege to accept this award, together with Beatrice, on behalf of all the remarkable human beings who form the ICAN movement. You each give me such tremendous hope that we can -- and will -- bring the era of nuclear weapons to an end.

I speak as a member of the family of hibakusha -- those of us who, by some miraculous chance, survived the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. For more than seven decades, we have worked for the total abolition of nuclear weapons.

We have stood in solidarity with those harmed by the production and testing of these horrific weapons around the world. People from places with long-forgotten names, like Moruroa, Ekker, Semipalatinsk, Maralinga, Bikini. People whose lands and seas were irradiated, whose bodies were experimented upon, whose cultures were forever disrupted.

We were not content to be victims. We refused to wait for an immediate fiery end or the slow poisoning of our world. We refused to sit idly in terror as the so-called great powers took us past nuclear dusk and brought us recklessly close to nuclear midnight. We rose up. We shared our stories of survival. We said: humanity and nuclear weapons cannot coexist.

Today, I want you to feel in this hall the presence of all those who perished in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. I want you to feel, above and around us, a great cloud of a quarter million souls. Each person had a name. Each person was loved by someone. Let us ensure that their deaths were not in vain.

I was just 13 years old when the United States dropped the first atomic bomb, on my city Hiroshima. I still vividly remember that morning. At 8:15, I saw a blinding bluish-white flash from the window. I remember having the sensation of floating in the air.

As I regained consciousness in the silence and darkness, I found myself pinned by the collapsed building. I began to hear my classmates' faint cries: "Mother, help me. God, help me."

Then, suddenly, I felt hands touching my left shoulder, and heard a man saying: "Don't give up! Keep pushing! I am trying to free you. See the light coming through that opening? Crawl towards it as quickly as you can." As I crawled out, the ruins were on fire. Most of my classmates in that building were burned to death alive. I saw all around me utter, unimaginable devastation.

Processions of ghostly figures shuffled by. Grotesquely wounded people, they were bleeding, burnt, blackened and swollen. Parts of their bodies were missing. Flesh and skin hung from their bones. Some with their eyeballs hanging in their hands. Some with their bellies burst open, their intestines hanging out. The foul stench of burnt human flesh filled the air.

Thus, with one bomb my beloved city was obliterated. Most of its residents were civilians who were incinerated, vaporized, carbonized -- among them, members of my own family and 351 of my schoolmates. In the weeks, months and years that followed, many thousands more would die, often in random and mysterious ways, from the delayed effects of radiation. Still to this day, radiation is killing survivors. Whenever I remember Hiroshima, the first image that comes to mind is of my four-year-old nephew, Eiji - his little body transformed into an unrecognizable melted chunk of flesh. He kept begging for water in a faint voice until his death released him from agony.

To me, he came to represent all the innocent children of the world, threatened as they are at this very moment by nuclear weapons. Every second of every day, nuclear weapons endanger everyone we love and everything we hold dear. We must not tolerate this insanity any longer.

Through our agony and the sheer struggle to survive -- and to rebuild our lives from the ashes -- we hibakusha became convinced that we must warn the world about these apocalyptic weapons. Time and again, we shared our testimonies.

But still some refused to see Hiroshima and Nagasaki as atrocities -- as war crimes. They accepted the propaganda that these were "good bombs" that had ended a "just war". It was this myth that led to the disastrous nuclear arms race -- a race that continues to this day.

Nine nations still threaten to incinerate entire cities, to destroy life on earth, to make our beautiful world uninhabitable for future generations. The development of nuclear weapons signifies not a country's elevation to greatness, but its descent to the darkest depths of depravity. These weapons are not a necessary evil; they are the ultimate evil.

On the seventh of July this year, I was overwhelmed with joy when a great majority of the world's nations voted to adopt the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. Having witnessed humanity at its worst, I witnessed, that day, humanity at its best. We hibakusha had been waiting for the ban for seventy-two years. Let this be the beginning of the end of nuclear weapons.

All responsible leaders will sign this treaty. And history will judge harshly those who reject it. No longer shall their abstract theories mask the genocidal reality of their practices. No longer shall "deterrence" be viewed as anything but a deterrent to disarmament. No longer shall we live under a mushroom cloud of fear.

To the officials of nuclear-armed nations -- and to their accomplices under the so-called "nuclear umbrella" -- I say this: Listen to our testimony. Heed our warning. And know that your actions are consequential. You are each an integral part of a system of violence that is endangering humankind. Let us all be alert to the banality of evil.

To every president and prime minister of every nation of the world, I beseech you: Join this treaty; forever eradicate the threat of nuclear annihilation.

When I was a 13-year-old girl, trapped in the smouldering rubble, I kept pushing. I kept moving toward the light. And I survived. Our light now is the ban treaty. To all in this hall and all listening around the world, I repeat those words that I heard called to me in the ruins of Hiroshima: "Don't give up! Keep pushing! See the light? Crawl towards it."

Tonight, as we march through the streets of Oslo with torches aflame, let us follow each other out of the dark night of nuclear terror. No matter what obstacles we face, we will keep moving and keep pushing and keep sharing this light with others. This is our passion and commitment for our one precious world to survive.

ICAN leader's Nobel Peace Prize speech

December 11, 2017

Nobel Peace Prize speech by ICAN leader Beatrice Fihn

The following is a speech delivered by Beatrice Fihn, leader of the Nobel Peace Prize winning International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), as released by the Nobel Foundation.

- **【Related】** Nuclear weapon ban campaigners receive Nobel Peace Prize
- **【Related】** Nobel Peace Prize speech by ICAN campaigner, Hiroshima survivor Setsuko Thurlow

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Your Majesties,

Members of the Norwegian Nobel Committee,

Esteemed guests,

Today, it is a great honour to accept the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize on behalf of thousands of inspirational people who make up the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons.

Together we have brought democracy to disarmament and are reshaping international law.

We most humbly thank the Norwegian Nobel Committee for recognizing our work and giving momentum to our crucial cause.

We want to recognize those who have so generously donated their time and energy to this campaign.

We thank the courageous foreign ministers, diplomats, Red Cross and Red Crescent staff, UN officials, academics and experts with whom we have worked in partnership to advance our common goal.

And we thank all who are committed to ridding the world of this terrible threat.

At dozens of locations around the world - in missile silos buried in our earth, on submarines navigating through our oceans, and aboard planes flying high in our sky - lie 15,000 objects of humankind's destruction.

Perhaps it is the enormity of this fact, perhaps it is the unimaginable scale of the consequences, that leads many to simply accept this grim reality. To go about our daily lives with no thought to the instruments of insanity all around us.

For it is insanity to allow ourselves to be ruled by these weapons. Many critics of this movement suggest that we are the irrational ones, the idealists with no grounding in reality. That nuclear-armed states will never give up their weapons.

But we represent the only rational choice. We represent those who refuse to accept nuclear weapons as a fixture in our world, those who refuse to have their fates bound up in a few lines of launch code.

Ours is the only reality that is possible. The alternative is unthinkable.

The story of nuclear weapons will have an ending, and it is up to us what that ending will be.

Will it be the end of nuclear weapons, or will it be the end of us?

One of these things will happen.

The only rational course of action is to cease living under the conditions where our mutual destruction is only one impulsive tantrum away.

Today I want to talk of three things: fear, freedom, and the future.

By the very admission of those who possess them, the real utility of nuclear weapons is in their ability to provoke fear. When they refer to their "deterrent" effect, proponents of nuclear weapons are celebrating fear as a weapon of war.

They are puffing their chests by declaring their preparedness to exterminate, in a flash, countless thousands of human lives.

Nobel Laureate William Faulkner said when accepting his prize in 1950, that "There is only the question of 'when will I be blown up?'" But since then, this universal fear has given way to something even more dangerous: denial.

Gone is the fear of Armageddon in an instant, gone is the equilibrium between two blocs that was used as the justification for deterrence, gone are the fallout shelters.

But one thing remains: the thousands upon thousands of nuclear warheads that filled us up with that fear. The risk for nuclear weapons use is even greater today than at the end of the Cold War. But unlike the Cold War, today we face many more nuclear armed states, terrorists, and cyber warfare. All of this makes us less safe.

Learning to live with these weapons in blind acceptance has been our next great mistake.

Fear is rational. The threat is real. We have avoided nuclear war not through prudent leadership but good fortune. Sooner or later, if we fail to act, our luck will run out.

A moment of panic or carelessness, a misconstrued comment or bruised ego, could easily lead us unavoidably to the destruction of entire cities. A calculated military escalation could lead to the indiscriminate mass murder of civilians.

If only a small fraction of today's nuclear weapons were used, soot and smoke from the firestorms would loft high into the atmosphere - cooling, darkening and drying the Earth's surface for more than a decade. It would obliterate food crops, putting billions at risk of starvation.

Yet we continue to live in denial of this existential threat.

But Faulkner in his Nobel speech also issued a challenge to those who came after him. Only by being the voice of humanity, he said, can we defeat fear; can we help humanity endure.

ICAN's duty is to be that voice. The voice of humanity and humanitarian law; to speak up on behalf of civilians. Giving voice to that humanitarian perspective is how we will create the end of fear, the end of denial. And ultimately, the end of nuclear weapons.

That brings me to my second point: freedom.

As the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, the first ever anti-nuclear weapons organisation to win this prize, said on this stage in 1985:

"We physicians protest the outrage of holding the entire world hostage. We protest the moral obscenity that each of us is being continuously targeted for extinction."

Those words still ring true in 2017.

We must reclaim the freedom to not live our lives as hostages to imminent annihilation.

Man -- not woman! -- made nuclear weapons to control others, but instead we are controlled by them.

They made us false promises. That by making the consequences of using these weapons so unthinkable it would make any conflict unpalatable. That it would keep us free from war.

But far from preventing war, these weapons brought us to the brink multiple times throughout the Cold War. And in this century, these weapons continue to escalate us towards war and conflict.

In Iraq, in Iran, in Kashmir, in North Korea. Their existence propels others to join the nuclear race. They don't keep us safe, they cause conflict.

As fellow Nobel Peace Laureate, Martin Luther King Jr, called them from this very stage in 1964, these weapons are "both genocidal and suicidal".

They are the madman's gun held permanently to our temple. These weapons were supposed to keep us free, but they deny us our freedoms.

It's an affront to democracy to be ruled by these weapons. But they are just weapons. They are just tools. And just as they were created by geopolitical context, they can just as easily be destroyed by placing them in a humanitarian context.

That is the task ICAN has set itself - and my third point I wish to talk about, the future.

I have the honour of sharing this stage today with Setsuko Thurlow, who has made it her life's purpose to bear witness to the horror of nuclear war.

She and the hibakusha were at the beginning of the story, and it is our collective challenge to ensure they will also witness the end of it.

They relive the painful past, over and over again, so that we may create a better future.

There are hundreds of organisations that together as ICAN are making great strides towards that future.

There are thousands of tireless campaigners around the world who work each day to rise to that challenge.

There are millions of people across the globe who have stood shoulder to shoulder with those campaigners to show hundreds of millions more that a different future is truly possible.

Those who say that future is not possible need to get out of the way of those making it a reality.

As the culmination of this grassroots effort, through the action of ordinary people, this year the hypothetical marched forward towards the actual as 122 nations negotiated and concluded a UN treaty to outlaw these weapons of mass destruction.

The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons provides the pathway forward at a moment of great global crisis. It is a light in a dark time.

And more than that, it provides a choice.

A choice between the two endings: the end of nuclear weapons or the end of us.

It is not naive to believe in the first choice. It is not irrational to think nuclear states can disarm. It is not idealistic to believe in life over fear and destruction; it is a necessity.

All of us face that choice. And I call on every nation to join the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

The United States, choose freedom over fear.

Russia, choose disarmament over destruction.

Britain, choose the rule of law over oppression.

France, choose human rights over terror.

China, choose reason over irrationality.

India, choose sense over senselessness.

Pakistan, choose logic over Armageddon.

Israel, choose common sense over obliteration.

North Korea, choose wisdom over ruin.

To the nations who believe they are sheltered under the umbrella of nuclear weapons, will you be complicit in your own destruction and the destruction of others in your name?

To all nations: choose the end of nuclear weapons over the end of us!

This is the choice that the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons represents. Join this Treaty.

We citizens are living under the umbrella of falsehoods. These weapons are not keeping us safe, they are contaminating our land and water, poisoning our bodies and holding hostage our right to life.

To all citizens of the world: Stand with us and demand your government side with humanity and sign this treaty. We will not rest until all States have joined, on the side of reason.

No nation today boasts of being a chemical weapon state.
No nation argues that it is acceptable, in extreme circumstances, to use sarin nerve agent.
No nation proclaims the right to unleash on its enemy the plague or polio.
That is because international norms have been set, perceptions have been changed.
And now, at last, we have an unequivocal norm against nuclear weapons.
Monumental strides forward never begin with universal agreement.
With every new signatory and every passing year, this new reality will take hold.
This is the way forward. There is only one way to prevent the use of nuclear weapons: prohibit and eliminate them.
Nuclear weapons, like chemical weapons, biological weapons, cluster munitions and land mines before them, are now illegal. Their existence is immoral. Their abolishment is in our hands.
The end is inevitable. But will that end be the end of nuclear weapons or the end of us? We must choose one.
We are a movement for rationality. For democracy. For freedom from fear.
We are campaigners from 468 organisations who are working to safeguard the future, and we are representative of the moral majority: the billions of people who choose life over death, who together will see the end of nuclear weapons.
Thank you.

Diplomacy yes (Part 1)

November 29, 2017

INTERVIEW/ William J. Perry: Diplomacy only viable option to deal with North Korean crisis

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201711290016.html>

THE ASAHI SHIMBUN

Former U.S. Secretary of Defense William J. Perry, who helped resolve the 1994 crisis on the Korean Peninsula, says the United States and other countries should stick to diplomacy to address military provocations by North Korean leader Kim Jong Un.

"Discussions and negotiations with North Korea are the only reasonable alternative to what could turn into a disastrous military operation," Perry told The Asahi Shimbun during an interview on Nov. 14 in Palo Alto, Calif.

Perry, 90, revealed that the Clinton administration drew up a plan to destroy North Korean nuclear facilities with cruise missiles in 1994.

He also said President Bill Clinton was prepared to "approve" his recommendation to send an additional 30,000 U.S. troops to South Korea to defend against a surprise attack from North Korea and safeguard Seoul.

Still, Perry sought a diplomatic solution as a presidential envoy to ease the tensions on the Korean Peninsula.

Perry said he does not believe that a U.S. first strike is a viable option today because North Korea already possesses an "arsenal of perhaps 20 or so nuclear weapons."

Speaking of the consequences of a war, Perry said: "As bad as the first Korean War was, a war in the Korean Peninsula that extends to Japan and that goes nuclear would be 10 times worse."

Perry said he is “convinced” that Defense Secretary James Mattis and Secretary of State Rex Tillerson both understand the consequences of a military action in North Korea, although he is not as sure whether President Donald Trump does.

“While they’re not the final decision-makers, they are certainly in a powerful position to recommend to the president, and I think they’re recommending diplomatic solutions rather than military solutions,” he said.

Perry, who advocated “A World Free of Nuclear Weapons” with three other U.S. statesmen in 2007, also suggested how the world could narrow the gap between the goal and the reality.

Excerpts from the interview follow:

* * *

NORTH KOREAN CRISIS IN 1994

Question: Could you review for us the work you did and what happened during the North Korean crisis when you were secretary of defense in 1994?

Perry: I was appointed secretary in February 1994, and the first crisis I faced as secretary was North Korea, which culminated in June but it actually began in March and April. The North Koreans had a nuclear reactor at Yongbyon, for the purpose of generating electrical power. And it was operated--its fuel was plutonium. And, after it operated for so many months, the fuel was spent, and you had to take it out for reprocessing. But the spent fuel from that kind of reactor can be converted into plutonium that can be used for a bomb. It’s a dangerous reactor, from that point of view.

Up until that point, the North Koreans were members of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, and they had promised, therefore, not to make atomic bombs. But in March or April, they announced they were going to begin reprocessing the fuel to make plutonium out of it. And had they done that, that would have given them enough plutonium for six nuclear bombs. So we were very strongly opposed to that. And in the ensuing discussions over the next few months, they actually sent the U.N. (International Atomic Energy Agency) inspectors home, who were there to see that they didn’t do something like that. And they were talking about withdrawing from the Non-Proliferation Treaty. So this was a very dangerous situation. My position at the time, which the president shared, was that we would not allow them to make six nuclear bombs and, therefore, we needed to stop them from reprocessing that fuel, which would give them plutonium. Once they had the plutonium, it was relatively easy to make the bomb. So the key action we could take was to stop them from the reprocessing. So I was the secretary at the time and I made the public statement, with the approval of the president, that we would not permit them to make plutonium and that we were prepared to take military action if necessary, to stop it. And this was, I might say, not an empty threat.

Since then, many secretaries and many presidents have made statements somewhat like that, but they were empty threats. But we were prepared to follow through. I actually had a plan, on my desk, for using a cruise missile to destroy Yongbyon (nuclear site), which would have meant they could not make the plutonium. Well, our first priority was to get the military (aspect) carried out. The military, as I said, was very far back on the table, but it was there, and it was a threat. It was the coercion factor of our diplomacy. We hoped, and believed, we would not have to apply it, but we were serious about it there, and we were prepared to apply it, had North Korea rebuffed our diplomatic approach. But they didn’t, so we’ll never know what would have happened.

But in my view, we were prepared at that time that if they rejected diplomacy and went ahead to start making nuclear bombs, we were prepared, then, as we knew the consequences could be serious, but we also believed the consequences of them getting a nuclear bomb would be serious and probably even more serious, which, in fact, has turned out to be.

But both I, and certainly the president, understood that that was an action we did not want to take, not because it would be any difficult doing it, not because the result wouldn't have been desirable, but the consequence was the possibility that North Korea would respond to that by taking military action against South Korea. Not against the United States, they had no way of doing that against the United States. But they could have taken it against South Korea. And as you know from looking at the map, the DMZ is very close to Seoul. Just imagine having North Korean troops 20 miles from Tokyo. You get an idea of that, of the consequences of this. So the military option was on the table but it was very far back on the table. We were pushing for diplomatic solutions.

Q: But was it nearly going to war?

A: Yes, because at the time the North Korean response was very aggressive. After I made my public statement, the North Korean press referred to me, personally, as a "war maniac," which is pretty far from the truth. I'm actually a very peaceful person. And, as I said, although I had the plan to destroy them, we did not intend to use it if we didn't have to. I favored, and certainly the president favored, diplomacy as our first option.

Q: And then how can you make sure that they would listen to you seriously, that they wouldn't really take it as an empty threat, but this is a serious one?

A: Well, once you make two or three empty threats, you lose credibility. We hadn't done that yet. So I think our threat was credible. It was reinforced inadvertently, in that shortly after I made that statement, the man who had been the national security adviser to the previous administration, Brent Scowcroft--he had been the national security adviser for the first President Bush--wrote an op-ed for The Washington Post, in which he recommended that we use cruise missiles to strike the reactor if the North Koreans did not stop the reprocessing.

He was a good friend of mine, and I have always believed that the North Koreans, who "do their homework" on these issues, believed that I had put him up to writing that article, and that we were serious about this. So we were favoring diplomacy but this is what you would call "coercive diplomacy." It was diplomacy with a promise, on the one hand, but with a threat. And I believe the threat was credible to the North back in 1994. All of the threats since then have not been credible and they have ignored them. That threat was credible.

So shortly after that, the next day, Kim Il Sung invited (former) President Jimmy Carter to come over, to discuss the crisis, which President Carter was happy to do. And that led, in a few days, to his offering to negotiate. It was a very close-run thing because between the time that Carter was invited over there--in the next few days after Carter was invited over there--we had put together our plan for imposing very, very serious sanctions on North Korea, and I had advised the president we should not impose those sanctions until we had--I said that it's possible that the sanctions themselves would precipitate a military strike against the South. In fact, that's what the North was saying they would do. And I thought we had to take them seriously.

So, during that period of a few days there, I met with the president, along with our chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and along with our military commander in Korea, who had come home for that meeting, to present to him a proposal to reinforce our troops in South Korea before we imposed the sanctions, so that if the North conducted a military action, we'd be prepared for it. And I was proposing a really substantial, you know, 30,000 more troops, which is a lot! Today, for example, we only have 30,000 troops in all of South Korea. But we then had 40-some-thousand. I was proposing to add another 30,000. So, this would have been a pretty significant move.

We were actually in the meeting, when I was proposing that, when the telephone call came from Carter, in Pyongyang. He said that Kim Il Sung was ready to negotiate about not processing the plutonium. And I

recommended to the president--which he accepted--that we accept his recommendation but only--only--if he agreed to stop the activity at Yongbyon, while the negotiations were going on. I was afraid the negotiations would be interminable and in the meantime they'd go ahead and make their plutonium. So that was the way we responded, and Kim Il Sung accepted that. And that led in just a ... that stopped the crisis and within a few months we had actually negotiated the so-called "Agreed Framework."

Q: Before the meeting at the White House you and Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman, Gen. Shalikashvili, summoned every active four-star general in the meeting. How many percent thought that you had to take military action that would be going to war at that time?

A: I want to be clear on one thing. We were not planning to start a war, but we recognized that the actions we would take and the strong position we were taking, in particular, sending more troops over there and imposing sanctions, might prompt North Korea to start a war. And we wanted to have strong enough forces there that, if they started a war, they could not overrun Seoul, because they would do inconceivable damage if they could actually capture Seoul. So, we wanted to have enough--we knew we would win a war with North Korea, but we wanted to win it before they destroyed Seoul. That's what the extra troops were there for, and that's why we were taking these actions.

Q: According to the book titled "The Two Koreas," written by a journalist, in the middle of May 1994, President Clinton was briefed on the estimation that causing a conflict would cost 52,000 U.S. military casualties, killed or wounded, and 490,000 South Korean military casualties, in the first 90 days. Is that correct?

A: I don't remember the numbers. That sounds reasonable.

Q: And what was the reaction of President Clinton after the briefing?

A: He was prepared to approve the reinforcement that I was proposing. I actually gave him several options. There was a 20,000, a 30,000, a 40,000. Several options. But they were all substantial, and he was quite clear he was going to approve them. He never had to make that decision because the phone call came in, literally minutes before he was going to make that decision. I have always wondered if that was coincidental or I suppose not, because it was publicly known that we were having the meeting, and so the North Koreans would have known that. And they wanted to get--I think they wanted to get their proposal in before the meeting was over. That's what I assumed anyway.

Q: While you were preparing military action, what did you coordinate or request to the Japanese government?

A: I made a trip over, the week before that meeting, to Japan and to South Korea. In South Korea, I met with both the American and the South Korean generals. I reviewed their plan. I forget the number now. It was a contingency plan for the defense of South Korea, in the event of a North Korean surprise attack. I had to review that, and that was what led me to conclude it would not be sufficient--we couldn't be sure it would stop the North Koreans before they destroyed Seoul. And that led me to conclude we needed to have another 30,000 troops. And so, Gen. Luck was the commander of the Joint Korean Forces at that time, and he was the one that made the recommendation, and then he came back with me to Washington for the briefing to President Clinton. That was the meeting with the South Koreans, both American and South Korean militaries, as well as the South Korean government officials and president. Then, I also met with the incoming Japanese prime minister (Tsutomu Hata). I don't remember whether it was before or after that meeting, but on the same trip. I told him what we were doing. I said that I believed we were not going to go into a war but we had to be prepared for it, but that if we went into a war, our plans and vision was not Japan entering the war, but envisioned using the air bases in Japan for resupplying our forces in Korea. I wanted him to be aware that our plans called for that, and to get his

prior permission for doing that, so I could tell the president we would be able to execute this plan, by using the Japanese air bases.

Q: What was Japan's reaction to that?

A: His reaction was "Yes, we understand that." But he asked me not to make a public statement about it. Which I didn't. It would unnecessarily worry the Japanese public.

Diplomacy yes (Part 2)

Q: As it turned out, you did sign the Agreed Framework with North Korea and avoided a military clash. What was the decisive factor to reach the agreement?

A: Well, the Agreed Framework, as it was constructed, could either end the nuclear threat from North Korea or at least delay it for a number of years. We couldn't be sure it would end it, but we were pretty sure--we knew it would delay it for many years. But I think, more importantly, the Agreed Framework--so, it put that nuclear problem at least on the back burner for a while. And then, in the meantime, it gave an opportunity to develop a more normal relationship with North Korea. The Agreed Framework had some what I would call "hard agreements" and some "soft agreements." The hard agreements had to do with the aid we were supplying North Korea, which was the biggest part of which was two commercial nuclear reactors for providing electricity to North Korea, which were going to be built by Japan and South Korea. And, until those reactors were on the air and providing electricity, the United States was going to provide fuel oil to run generators to provide electricity. So, there were the "hard" features of it.

And we complied with those agreements. I must admit that the building of the reactors ran behind schedule. It was a couple years behind. But it was being built. And I have pictures of the state of construction at the time that it was actually stopped. It was pretty, reasonably, far along. But it was a couple years behind schedule, which the North Koreans--rightfully, I think--complained about. But, in essence, the "hard agreements" were being met. But the "soft agreements" envisioned assistance to North Korea in building up its industry, assistance in improving their agriculture, trade agreements back and forth, family meetings between South and North Koreans, the things that would start making North Korea more like a normal nation.

And, to me, the soft agreements were just as important as the hard agreements, but in fact the soft agreements were never met. When people say we didn't comply with the Agreed Framework, they're usually talking about the fact that the reactors were running a little bit late. I don't think that was the big issue because they were being built, and visibly being built. You could see them being built. I think it was the fact that we did not go ahead with the soft agreements. South Korea did go ahead with one of them, which was moving ahead with the establishment of the industrial facility at Kaesong. That was one positive consequence. But the United States did none of those things. And the reason the president did not do those things is because he ran into a very strong resistance in the U.S. Congress for even having signed the Agreed Framework. Many, particularly Republicans, did not agree with it. And, in fact, when President George Bush--the second President Bush--finally was elected in 2001, one of the first things he did was seek to revoke the Agreed Framework, which happened in 2002, I think.

So, there was a lot of resistance to the Agreed Framework and, as a consequence, President Clinton decided to meet the hard agreements to the Agreed Framework. Every year we supplied fuel oil, although I must say it came out of the Defense Department budget, so I had to get the authorization from the Congress, and there was much resistance in the Congress for doing that. The first year I just did it, I didn't ask for permission, and I got pretty badly criticized for doing that. The second year I went back for the

permission. I got the permission but after a hard fight. So, the Congress was opposed. And it was a small problem in the first year or two, when there was still Democratic control of the Congress, but in the third year of my term the Republicans gained control of the Congress and it was very, very hard to get the "hard agreements" carried out. We did. But the "soft agreements" were not carried out because President Clinton had so much resistance on the "hard agreements." He said, "Well, we'll meet the 'hard agreements;' we'll give up on the soft." We never did them. We'll never know, we cannot relive history so we'll never know whether we would have had a different outcome if we had actually followed through on those what I call "soft agreements."

Q: Do you think that would have, sort of, changed the society of North Korea, from the core from that point?

A: I think there was a possibility. I think North Korea was probably sincere in wanting those soft agreements to be carried out, wanting to become more like a normal nation. And we later saw that manifested when I had another chance to negotiate with them in 1999 and 2000, when they actually did things like having their athletes march with the South Korean athletes to the Olympics. We saw Kim Jong Il going to Shanghai to visit the stock exchange. He was thinking of introducing something like that into his country. So there was, I think, serious consideration by North Korea to stop being "the hermit kingdom" and start joining the family of nations. And there were provisions in the Agreed Framework which facilitated that happening, which were not carried out, and we'll never know, had they been carried out, if it would have made a difference. But I'm inclined to believe it would have. And the same thing with two of the later discussions we had in the year 2000.

CURRENT NORTH KOREAN CRISIS

Q: And, moving to the second part, the current North Korean crisis, compared to the crisis in 1994, from your view, how serious is the current crisis?

A: Oh, much more serious. Much more. Because they now have a nuclear arsenal. That's the difference. The threats sound the same. Kim Jong Un, although he's younger than Kim Jong Il was, is saying many of the same things. We don't know if he's as seasoned as--we know he's not as seasoned. We don't know if he's as conservative as Kim Il Sung was. But he's saying many of the same things. But the big difference, really, is that now the North Koreans have a nuclear arsenal. I don't believe for a minute that they're planning to make an unprovoked strike with that arsenal. The threats against Tokyo, the threats against Seoul, I think are empty threats. They're bombastic, in the sense that they will not make an unprovoked strike. It's not threats that, if we make a military strike against them, that would be the response. So, the difference today is if we made a military strike in 1994, there would have been some kind of a conventional military action against South Korea. It might have been serious. I mean, it might have been small scale or large scale, I don't know, but it would have been something. But it would not have been nuclear; they didn't have nuclear bombs then. So, it would have been limited in damage. Today, if they make a strike, it could go nuclear and there could be huge numbers of casualties. So, there's several orders of magnitude difference of the consequences today, as opposed to 1994. Some of the qualitative factors are very much the same, but the quantitative factor, in the number of casualties that would occur, is very much larger.

Q: Do you mean the pre-emptive strike that you considered in the past is not one of the options right now?

A: The government says it's an option. I do not believe it's viable. I do not believe that a military option, today, is--a first-strike military option--is a viable option. The only way I see our military being used today is in response to a first action by North Korea, which I don't think is going to happen. So, the danger today, I believe, is that we will blunder into some kind of a war, which could go nuclear, not that either the United States or North Korea would want to start a war. But we could blunder into it in various ways.

One of them would be if the United States conducted a limited strike, for some limited purpose, and North Korea might respond with nuclear. That's what I would call "blundering into it," because obviously we wouldn't make that strike if we thought it was going to lead to a nuclear response. Another is that we could threaten North Korea so loud and so strong and so convincing that they might believe that we're about to conduct a decapitation strike, and that they might, then, use their weapons first, in desperation. I don't think either of those outcomes is likely, but that's the way I think we could blunder into a war. And that's, again, what I think today is, not that either the United States or South Korea or North Korea would deliberately start a war, but that we would blunder into it through some kind of a miscalculation, either on our part or on the North Koreans' part.

Q: How about the difficulties to negotiate with North Korea, compared with the past?

A: I never had great difficulty in negotiating with them. I was not a direct negotiator in '94; I was only an indirect negotiator. But in 1999 and 2000, I directly negotiated with them (as a presidential envoy). I went to Pyongyang, spent four days there meeting with their top officials, and we negotiated an agreement to replace the Agreed Framework. A big improvement over the Agreed Framework, much more comprehensive agreement. And that resulted in then-leader Kim Jong Il sending his top military man to Washington for a meeting and basically coming up with a handshake agreement on what we had negotiated in Pyongyang. But that handshake was in October 2000, and one month later we had an election and the Republican administration, the one who had been opposed to the Agreed Framework, now came into power. And they did not sign the agreement; they terminated the agreement. In fact, they terminated all discussion with North Korea for two years. So, for two years, there were no discussions at all. And I guess you might say "the rest is history," that we tried to--China tried to--stimulate a recovery from that, by convening the six-party talks, which by then the Bush administration was ready to take part in. But, as is well known, those did not result in an agreement, and by a few years after we started the six-party talks, North Korea conducted its first nuclear test. And now they have an arsenal of perhaps 20 or so nuclear weapons. There have been many threats in the meantime, to not let them do that, that the United States would not tolerate that. But those are empty threats, and those empty threats were made both by the Bush administration and by the Obama administration. But, as I said, they were empty and therefore any threats we make today lack credibility because of the succession of empty threats that were made. I repeat again, the threat we made in 1994, while we never had to carry it out, was not an empty threat. We were prepared to carry it out.

Q: As you pointed out, Kim Jong Un is taking provocative action. What is his main objective?

A: His main objective, without doubt, in my mind, is preserving the Kim dynasty, sustaining the regime. That's what he's all about. And he has succeeded in doing that. He and his father and grandfather have succeeded in doing that against all odds. From the time that the Soviet Union collapsed, Stalinist regimes all over the world have been disappearing. Not North Korea. North Korea has hung in there. It's the last Stalinist regime left in the world. So they've done, from their point of view, they've done something right; they've sustained their dynasty. Now they're on the third generation of that dynasty. That's what they're all about, I think.

Their second objective is to earn international respect and recognition. So, when I negotiated with them in 1999 and 2000, I had in my mind "That's what they are looking for." And we had a proposal of how they could get those--they get those two objectives, of course, with nuclear weapons. Our proposal was how they could get those two objectives without nuclear weapons. And we had a proposal which I think satisfied them and was reasonable for us. But we also offered them some economic incentives. And while that's obviously desirable to them, they've demonstrated over and over again that has a lower priority

than the first two. Sustaining the dynasty, maintain their security, and gaining international respect and recognition. They want the economics but not at the cost of those first two.

Q: This summer, you sent a letter with former Secretary of State George Shultz to President Donald Trump to encourage him to begin discussion with North Korea. If you were secretary of defense under the Trump administration, what would you advise to the president on North Korea?

A: I cannot imagine myself being secretary of defense under the Trump administration, I'm sorry. That's "a road too far" for me. What I recommended to the secretary of defense presently, Secretary James Mattis, is that he support the view of discussions and negotiations with the North, as the only reasonable alternative to what could turn into a disastrous military operation. And I do know that he understands how serious a military action could be in North Korea, does not take it lightly at all. And therefore, I think he's working in that direction. I'm not saying he's doing things I would be doing, nothing like that. But I'm satisfied that he does understand the consequences. I'm not convinced the president does, but I'm convinced that the secretary of defense does, and the secretary of state does. So that's the only comfort I have with the situation today, is that while they're not the final decision-makers, they are certainly in a powerful position to recommend to the president, and I think they're recommending diplomatic solutions rather than military solutions.

Q: Do you think Kim Jong Un is a leader with whom we can seriously negotiate?

A: Well, I'd like to find out. We haven't put it to the test yet. Based on the action of his two predecessors, the answer is yes. We tested it out with them and they were both, given a reasonable proposal, they were willing to jump on it. Although you have to be careful. The other two agreements we've made with them were agreements which they cheated on, one way or the other. So, even then, it delayed their nuclear program by many years. But if we were going to negotiate today, we would like to get not only a delay in bad things happening, but have some kind of a verification system which reduces the possibility, the likelihood, they'll be able to successfully cheat.

He is succeeding in what he's doing and you have to measure a crazy person who does something which makes no sense--leads to results which are bad for him. He wanted to keep his regime in power. He's got a nuclear arsenal and it does that. It certainly raises the stakes on anybody that's thinking of attacking North Korea. He wants to gain international respect and recognition. He's done that. So how can you call that crazy? He might not be wise but he's not crazy. He's ruthless, he's reckless; he's not crazy. That's not based on a psychoanalysis of him, which I couldn't do; it's based on the results. He's getting what he wants. That's rational.

Q: President Trump and Kim Jong Un have been exchanging harsh rhetoric. How do you see President Trump's brinksmanship on North Korea, using name calling?

A: I think this harsh rhetoric is a mistake for both of them. It's a mistake because it's intended to intimidate the other. Obviously it's not, it's not intimidating North Korea. And certainly their threats to us don't intimidate the United States. What it does is stimulate their thinking that we might be preparing a decapitation attack. And I believe that President Trump thinks he's intimidating them. But what he might be stimulating exactly the action he doesn't want, which is a military first strike on the part of North Korea. As I said before, I do not believe that a first strike would be in their interests, and I think they understand that. So they would only do it in a desperate situation. Hopefully, even very threatening rhetoric would not lead them to believe that we were about to attack. But that's the danger. That's the danger.

Q: You mentioned that there is more chance of a miscalculation now if you compare it to the past crises. Why do you think there is? What are the elements of miscalculation?

A: Yes, it increases the risk of a miscalculation, which is higher today than it was in previous crises. Well, the threats of--the North Koreans have always made harsh threats. They are masters of invective. They

talk about--years ago they talked about--turning Seoul into “a sea of flames.” Years ago they called me a “war maniac.” I mean, anybody that tries to outinvective them is going to lose the battle. That’s what they’re good at. So, we should--I would counsel two things about these rash statements. The first is that we not get too excited over the North Korean statements. Just look at their history of statements. That’s what they do. Secondly, that we don’t play their game, we don’t engage, we don’t try to match, try to outinvective them. First of all, we’re not going to win that battle and secondly it creates the danger, an unnecessary danger.

Q: And then I guess President Trump’s tweets.

A: Yes! It’s the president speaking, whether he does it in a tweet or in a news conference or in a message to Congress, that’s what he’s saying. And you have to take it seriously if it comes from the president. So, I think those rash, reckless, threats create an unnecessary danger and I wish the president would not do that.

Q: Now North Korea refuses to negotiate with the United States on the condition for giving up the nuclear program. Do you think it’s difficult for North Korea to dismantle, not suspend, nuclear weapons?

A: Well first of all, if we insist on getting the results from the negotiations before going into the negotiations, we’ll never get negotiations. So that, to me, is completely obvious. That’s a foolish position for us to take. We can go into the negotiations with the goal of getting them to do that, but we can’t go into the negotiations with that agreement before we go in and negotiate. Now, if we do get a negotiation, what result could we expect to get from it? When I negotiated with them in 1999 and 2000, the result we sought, and would not settle for less than, was a result of them agreeing to interrupt the nuclear program, and their long-range missile program. That was what we were negotiating.

But they didn’t have one then. Now they have one. They have the nuclear arsenal, some of them operational, and they have hundreds of short- and medium-range missiles, some of which are capable of carrying nuclear weapons, and they’re developing a long--range missile program. Within a year or two they will probably have a long-range missile operational. They’re not going to give that up. The best we can hope to do right now, I think, is getting them to stop what they’re doing--in other words, damage limiting--and then, if we could get that, then work to start ratcheting it down, rolling it back. But it’s a much harder negotiation today than it was when I talked with them in 1999. Then, I was trying to get them to give up going on a program, which they were not sure would succeed. Now you have to talk to them, you have to ask them to give up a program they already have, an arsenal they already have, an arsenal which they see as being tremendously valuable, which gives them two of their three main objectives, which is the security and the international respect. Why would they give that up?

So, we have to have very powerful incentives, to even get them to talk about doing it, to talk about freezing it, stopping it at some level, and then start working back. That’s a very tough negotiation. We missed a huge opportunity, back in 1999-2000, when we didn’t go ahead with. We missed another huge opportunity back in the six-party talks, not being able to drive home an agreement there. So, we’ve lost those opportunities. Now they have the nuclear arsenal; it’s infinitely harder to try to get an agreement. If we get one, it will be--the results will be less desirable to us and the price we’ll have to pay will be higher. It’s just elementary math, I think, that’s what the outcome is going to be.

Diplomacy yes (Part 3)

Q: North Korea has been developing both nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles, which have the ability to reach the United States. Do you regret that you did not destroy the nuclear facilities at that time?

A: I regret that we didn't stop them from getting any nuclear weapons. Whether or not it hits the United States, it can hit Japan, it can hit South Korea. Japan and South Korea are our allies. We can't sit back and see the threat to maybe tens of millions of people. You know, if nuclear bombs are going off in Tokyo and Seoul, it would be a catastrophe of the first order. We have to care about that, first of all, whether or not it can hit the United States. But I am convinced they are going to go to that next stage and to get to a weapon capable of hitting the United States. It's sort of a nuclear blackmail approach, and to cause Japan and South Korea to worry about whether we would apply our extended deterrence. That was the logic during the Cold War, when the Soviet Union was threatening the United States and Germany. Germany wondered, "Would the United States come to their aid?" The cliché in those days was "Would the United States sacrifice New York in order to save Berlin, or Bonn?" That same question could be asked today. The way we solved the problem then, at the German request, was we based our nuclear weapons in Germany, with our troops there. And so, we didn't have an out. We were stuck. We had to defend them. And that gave them the confidence to go ahead. You can imagine the situation perhaps developing today, with either Japan or South Korea. I don't think it's desirable, and I think the extended deterrence carried out by our nuclear submarines, say, are sufficient to the job. But I can imagine, I can understand, why the people in Japan and the people in South Korea might want additional assurance. And that could be done by basing nuclear weapons in their countries. I want to be clear, though; I'm not recommending that. I do not think it's a good idea. I think what we ought to do, what American leaders ought to do, is make it unambiguously clear that we will support the alliance and we will support extended deterrence, we will do the things we have promised to do, and make any--whatever commitment necessary, that's necessary to assure the Japanese people and the South Korean people that we'll do that. That's far preferable to actually basing nuclear weapons in the two countries.

Q: On negotiation with North Korea, what do you think is the role of China and Russia?

A: I'm not sure. I know what China--I have my own view of what China "ought" to be thinking. They ought to be very, very concerned that a war is going to get started on the peninsula, and maybe even a nuclear war. That has to be adverse to their own interests. I think they should be very much concerned that South Korea, maybe even Japan, might go nuclear themselves. That has to be adverse to their interests. The North Korean nuclear program is stimulating actions which, if they occur, would be highly detrimental to China's interests. They cannot want that to happen. And so they ought to be taking this, I think, more seriously and working more closely to try to get a resolution to the problem than they have been. But I'm not saying--I'm not pointing to China and saying "You solve this problem," just like they point to us and say "You solve this problem." This is a problem that would be solved much better if the United States and China would work together because together they'd make much more powerful incentives and disincentives on North Korea. And had that happened years ago, we might have been able to avoid a nuclear arsenal. Even today, we can minimize the danger of the nuclear arsenal if China would work cooperatively with the United States, as well as with Japan and with South Korea.

Q: President Trump has just finished his first trip to Asia, including meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping. How do you see his accomplishments or performance during his first visit to Asia?

A: On the outstanding issue of the day, which we're talking about right now, which is a nuclear North Korea, I can't see that he accomplished anything based on the public reports in the media. I can hope that in the private discussions, which are not yet published, he had some progress. But what has been published publicly, I see nothing of any value, I'm sorry to say, relative to the North Korean problem. I'm not making a more sweeping statement than that.

Q: President Trump tweeted that negotiations are a waste of time. And Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said since 1994 and 2006, North Korea lied and now is not the time for dialogue. Many pointed out that diplomacy is impossible with North Korea. What's your reaction to that?

A: I say maybe this is not the time for dialogue, that's debatable. What's not debatable is this is not the time for a nuclear war. And I'm not sure what the alternative to a military conflict is, except diplomacy. So, I favor diplomacy. I favor talking with North Korea and favor talking with or without preconditions. I'm not at all confident that we'll get a good result from that, but I am confident we'll not get a good result if we don't talk with them, because I am confident that we do not have a viable military option right now.

Q: And, from your point of view, how should the Japanese government manipulate this situation or take a position on the North Korean issue? What's your advice to the Japanese government?

A: I think that in any consideration on the issue in Japan there ought to be a clear understanding on the part of Japanese leaders of what the consequence of failure of diplomacy is. That while I'm convinced that North Korea is not planning a surprise nuclear attack on Japan, I do believe it's a possible consequence of a failure of diplomacy, of a failure to talk, and the possibility of an accidental war, a blundering war, happening partly as a result of the reckless rhetoric and the absence of a diplomatic path. That's complicated, as I say. In the absence of diplomacy and in the presence of reckless talk, we have created the conditions which make--which allow us to blunder into a war, a war which could turn nuclear and which would be very catastrophic. So, I get back to the fact that the Japanese government and the Japanese people, as well as the American government and people, should be looking for diplomatic solutions to this problem.

If I thought there were a viable military option, I'd be pushing it. But I don't see one. And I see what many people, to me amazingly, fail to see is the huge consequences of a war. As bad as the first Korean War was, a war in the Korean Peninsula that extends to Japan and that goes nuclear would be 10 times worse. And we're talking about casualties that equal those of World War II! I don't understand why people don't understand that. It's so obvious, so straightforward. And we have to get serious about diplomacy. And the Japanese government should be working to encourage that and to promote it. They can't do it alone, but they can contribute to it. I'd like to see Prime Minister Abe promoting that in his discussion with President Trump.

Q: And if North Korea gets a nuclear arsenal, the Asian security environment will be changed dramatically. And that will encourage voices calling for Japan and South Korea to consider the possibility of obtaining their own nuclear weapons. How do you see the reasonability for Japan to have a nuclear capability or change the principles on nuclear policy?

A: They do have nuclear weapons. They do have one now and that has changed it. Everything's changed, as a result of that. Yes, it's already happening. And there's already been a dramatic change in the public discussion in South Korea. And to a certain extent in Japan as well, to a lesser extent in Japan but still much greater than in the past. So that now people are considering what would have been unthinkable a decade ago. And it's easy to understand why people feeling under threat of a nuclear attack might want to have their own nuclear arsenal. Certainly all the nuclear powers have set that example, saying that, "Our nuclear weapons are vital to our security," so why should we expect Japan, South Korea, and other countries not to say the same thing?

And yet, I'm convinced that this move would be a wrong move for both Japan and South Korea. I do not agree at all with the president's statement some time ago that it would be "Fine, why not?" I do not agree with that at all. I think [there are] many negative consequences. And the only objective reason for Japan and South Korea to go nuclear themselves is if they did not believe that the U.S. extended deterrence was going to be effective, if they did not trust the United States to protect them. So, it's a crisis in trust, I think,

right now. And it's up to the United States to overcome that crisis of trust, to convince both the Japanese and the South Koreans that our extended deterrence is strong and valid and would react to North Korea. I think we should be willing to do what we need to do to make that point absolutely clear.

The downside of Japan, and the people in Japan who argue for a nuclear program you can be sure are not chess players. In chess, the famous concept is what's called "the fallacy of the last move." It's when you make a move in chess which you feel very good about because it puts the other side in a bad position. But you haven't thought two or three moves ahead, to how he might exploit the move you've just taken. So, people in Japan think, "We're going to get a nuclear program and that makes us strong and that protects us." That's the first move that's made. But they forget about the second move and third move, "You do that, what does North Korea do, what does China do? How does China react to Japan getting that?" They will increase their nuclear arsenal. Then you have to increase yours, and South Korea you get going a nuclear arms race in Northeast Asia. The consequence of either South Korea or Japan going nuclear is almost without doubt a nuclear arms race starting in Northeast Asia and it's hard to believe that's going to be good for anybody.

'WORLD FREE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS'

Q: And the final part is about the gap of the world free of nuclear weapons and the real world. In 2006, you joined three other statesmen, including Henry Kissinger, in calling for pursuing a world free of nuclear weapons. In my understanding, given your experience in the Cuban Missile Crisis and nuclear deterrence to Russia, and the North Korean crisis, you understand effectiveness of nuclear deterrence. Why do you think the United States should seek a world free of nuclear weapons?

A: Well, I think about that because I have actually looked into the "nuclear abyss" a few times in my life, and I don't like what I see. I really thought several times in my life we were about to go to a nuclear war. We were very close to it in the Cuban Missile Crisis, very close, closer than most people realize. We almost had an accidental launch. That is, we almost started a nuclear war by mistakenly believing that we were under attack. That's called "the false alarm problem." And I experienced personally one of those, and I've never forgotten it.

So, the prospect of a nuclear war does not seem far removed or academic to me, and the consequence of a nuclear war I've also studied very carefully, and they're unimaginable. It is possible to imagine it, but you don't want to imagine it. So that motivated me, along with my comrades, Shultz and Kissinger and (Sen. Sam) Nunn, to write an op-ed arguing that we ought to, ultimately, be seeking an end to nuclear weapons and in the meantime working to, doing the various things that could be done, to reduce the danger that they pose. And, for several years, that proposal had pretty good traction. The high point actually came when President Barack Obama, after being elected, made his famous speech in Prague.

Q: And, however, the reality is that Russia reportedly violates the Arms Control Treaty and as you know, the number of countries that possess nuclear weapons, such as India and Pakistan, is increasing, even though the NPT exists. How do we fill the gap between the ideal of "a nuclear-free world" and the real world?

A: For a few years after we wrote our first op-ed, if the ideal was out there and we were there we were moving toward it. Slowly, but moving toward it. The peak of that came, as I said, when President Obama made his famous speech in Prague, stating a serious conviction that the United States would seek a world without nuclear weapons, "peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons." That was the high point of it. Since then, we're going backward. And today we're farther away from that goal than we were when we made the op-ed. So, from my point of view, the op-ed was a failure. We not only didn't succeed in getting--we initially succeeded in getting closer to the goal, but where we stand today is even farther away from it.

And that happened for a number of reasons, but I think the primary reason was that during that period, for reasons unrelated to nuclear weapons, we, the United States and Russia, developed and went from a period of friendliness and cooperation to a period of hostility. It was already beginning at that time but it took a very dangerous turn about 2008-2009. So today, I would say, that we're recreating many of the conditions of the Cold War. And those conditions don't lend themselves to people wanting to dismantle their nuclear weapons. Between now and then, though, we actually--you know, we've gone from 75,000 nuclear weapons to 15,000 in the world. That's the good news. The bad news we're at 15,000. 15,000 is still enough weapons to destroy the planet several times over.

If the United States and Russia--let's say Russia, with 6,000-7,000 nuclear weapons, used even a third of these to attack the United States, and if by some miracle that will never happen, we were able to shoot down half of them, our country's still destroyed. There are more than enough nuclear weapons today to destroy our country several times over, and vice versa. So, we're not only very far from that goal we were setting then, but we're moving backward. Today, Russia and the United States are both engaged in rebuilding the Cold War nuclear arsenal. So, our effort was a failure, I have to say. It succeeded for a few years but ultimately it then failed.

Q: And my final question is Japan is the only country to have suffered an atomic bombing. However, the Japanese government did not sign the U.N. Nuclear Ban Treaty this summer because Japan accepts the nuclear umbrella provided by the United States. That angered the hibakusha. How do you see the Japanese government's role on nuclear non-proliferation or a nuclear-free world?

A: Well, the nuclear powers did not sign that agreement or even attend the meetings. And it would have been hypocritical of them to have done so while their security still ultimately depends on nuclear weapons, and while they're in the process of rebuilding their arsenals. So, they still believe that their security ultimately depends on the nuclear weapons. And so, if they were to sign the agreement, they would have to be prepared to take a different course of action than they're now taking, and it's quite clear they're not. They still--it's hard to believe they're going to do that as long as the hostility that exists today continues to exist. And Japan is in sort of the same position. While you don't have nuclear weapons, your security depends on nuclear weapons, as you see it. In this case, the U.S. nuclear weapons. But that's what the extended deterrence is all about. So, it would have been hypocritical of Japan to have signed it, really. Having said that, they might have done more than they did. They might have said some different things, indicating that, in principle, they supported the idea. I mean, there are many things they could have done other than just boycotting the thing. And Japan, of all nations, having suffered Hiroshima and Nagasaki, has some moral stand to take. Actually, the United States, having used the weapons against Hiroshima and Nagasaki, has a moral reason for taking the stand too, but we're not doing it. Having said that, I'm still pleased that the U.N. resolution was passed. I do not expect any direct consequences from that, but it's a statement of moral standing, it's an ethical position, it's saying, "This is what it should be. It's not what is; it's a statement of what should be." And it's worth saying that sometimes, even if you're not able to make it true.

One of my colleagues told me that, back in the day when we were talking about the first op-ed we wrote, and he was saying this was sort of a--"Will be seen as a glorious gesture which has no consequences." He said, "You can't judge consequences by what happens this year or next year. Sometimes a strong position of saying 'This is what is right' will have a long-term effect." And the example he used, which is particularly apt for an American, was a statement in an early document in America more than 200 years ago, that "all men are created equal." At the time our founding fathers made that statement, "all men are created equal," it was nonsense! We had slaves! They were not equal. Women were not allowed to vote,

they were not equal. Even white men who did not own a house were not allowed to vote. So all men are not created equal.

But it was a principle they stated and they believed in the principle. And they're not being hypocritical to state a principle. And over time, sometimes with great hardship, we moved closer and closer to that goal. But having the goal out there was important. It gives the impetus to moving toward the goal. We're not there today yet, but we're a lot closer today than we were in 1776.

And I don't believe we'd be that much closer had our founding fathers not had the wisdom and the courage to make that statement, "All men are created equal." So, no nation should have nuclear weapons. Well, that's not true today. But it's a principle. It's what ought to be. And the more people that say that, the more people who talk about it, the more people who think about it, the sooner we'll get to that position, the closer we'll move to that position. That's what I have to say about the U.N. resolution.

Q: Are you an idealist or a realist?

A: I'm a very practical person, a very practical person. I think it's important to have ideals, it's important to work toward those ideals. But it's also important to know what you can "do" in the world today. When I was secretary of defense, I thought about what I could "do" in the world today. And when I looked at a North Korea crisis, I looked at practical steps we could take, both in terms of limiting North Korean nuclear weapons with threats we were prepared to carry out, and in terms of looking to North Korea as a way of understanding what problem they were trying to solve and see if you could help them solve that. So when I looked at 1999 and negotiated, I was looking at their problem. I was trying to put myself in their shoes and say, "Why are they being so hard to get along with? It's because they're afraid that they're going to be overthrown, the regime is going to be overthrown." That's what they're trying to preserve. I might not share that belief with them, but I have to understand them if I'm going to negotiate with them, that's their belief, and I'm not going to succeed in negotiations unless I can do something to help them, move them, toward what they want to do.

I was never trained as a diplomat. I don't have the "golden tongue" of a diplomat. But I came to believe that the tongue is the least important aspect of the diplomat. What he needs are ears. He needs to listen to what the other side is saying, what they believe. That's what he has to do.

Q: I realized you were a mathematician, I felt still closer to you because I majored in mathematics. How did it make any difference as defense secretary having a mathematics background?

A: Not many people do that. We are a rare breed. It's hard to say. I don't remember ever solving any equations when I was secretary of defense. But the training in mathematics, like some of the other secretaries who did physics, training in science, mathematics or physics gives a way of thinking about the problems, a logical way of thinking. And I think that's valuable. The secretaries I know, who were physicists or scientists trained, at least did not have fuzzy thinking. And that doesn't mean they were right, but they reasoned through step by step the problems.

Well, you know, I never considered myself a political figure, even though the secretary of defense has to be confirmed by the Senate. They consider it political but I never did; I considered that I was the secretary of defense for both Republicans and Democrats. That is, I thought of it as a nonpartisan position, from a political point of view.

(This article is based on an interview by Senior National Security Correspondent Taketsugu Sato and Yu Miyaji, correspondent in San Francisco.)

Now is the time for Japan to rethink its response to ban treaty

December 12, 2017

Editorial: Nobel Peace Prize a chance to rethink Japan's response to nuclear ban treaty

<https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20171212/p2a/00m/0na/023000c>

An atomic bombing survivor delivered a speech at the Nobel Peace Prize ceremony for the first time. Her name is Setsuko Thurlow, 85, a Hiroshima A-bomb survivor who now lives in Canada.

- **【Related】** ICAN campaigner Thurlow moves audience with emotional Nobel Peace Prize speech
- **【Related】** Nuclear weapon ban campaigners receive Nobel Peace Prize
- **【Related】** Nobel Peace Prize speech by ICAN leader Beatrice Fihn
- **【Related】** Nobel Peace Prize speech by ICAN campaigner, Hiroshima survivor Setsuko Thurlow

Thurlow walked up to the podium alongside Beatrice Fihn, executive director of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) -- this year's peace prize winner -- when the latter made her acceptance speech. This was because Thurlow had played a key role in the adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons passed at a U.N. conference this past summer by giving testimony of her experience of the bomb on various occasions in many different countries, among other activities. Thurlow experienced the bombing of Hiroshima on Aug. 6, 1945, when she was 13 years old. "With one bomb my beloved city was obliterated. Most of its residents were civilians who were incinerated, vaporized, carbonized," Thurlow said in the Dec. 10 speech. She demanded nuclear abolishment as she repeated the words she heard when she got trapped under a collapsed building on that day 72 years ago: "Don't give up! Keep pushing! See the light? Crawl towards it." Behind her devotion to urge countries to join the ban treaty lies her belief that nuclear weapons are "the ultimate evil." Fihn called the adoption of the ban treaty "a light in a dark time," but also said critics call the movement one led by "idealists with no grounding in reality."

Other atomic bomb survivors, or hibakusha, present at the ceremony in Oslo included two members of the nationwide hibakusha group Japan Confederation of A- and H-Bomb Sufferers Organizations.

Global interest in the inhumane nature of nuclear weapons was heightened thanks to the continued work of hibakusha who have been taking part in anti-nuclear weapons activities as living witnesses.

The late hibakusha Senji Yamaguchi delivered an emotional speech at the U.N. headquarters in 1982, calling for "no more hibakusha." Nagasaki atomic bombing survivor Sumiteru Taniguchi, who passed away this past summer at age 88, urged the world to abolish nuclear weapons at the U.N. headquarters in 2010 while holding a photo of his young self with severe burns on his back, which he sustained from the bombing.

Still, nuclear powers' efforts to reduce such weapons have not progressed, and North Korea continues to develop nuclear arms. The gap between reality and hibakusha's desires to see a world without nuclear weapons is overwhelming.

Nuclear powers and countries that fall under the nuclear umbrella, such as Japan, have not joined the ban treaty. Ambassadors of the U.S., Britain, France, Russia and China to Norway did not attend the Dec. 10

award ceremony. It is regrettable that the conflict over the treaty was brought to the Peace Prize ceremony.

Japan's Foreign Minister Taro Kono has released a statement saying that Japan shares the goal of nuclear abolition. Hiroshima Mayor Kazumi Matsui, who attended the Peace Prize ceremony, meanwhile, has denied the effect of nuclear deterrence, saying that "to believe we are protected by nuclear (weapons) is an illusion."

Japan, the only country ever to suffer atomic bombing during war, is expected to play a bridging role between nuclear powers and non-nuclear nations. The country should take the thoughts of hibakusha seriously and rethink its response to the nuclear weapons ban treaty.

Nuke ban treaty: No, says Suga

December 12, 2017

Day after ICAN Nobel ceremony, Suga reiterates Japan will not sign nuke ban treaty

https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20171212/p2a/00m/0na/012000c#cxrecs_s

The day after the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) received the Nobel Peace Prize, Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga reiterated that Japan would not sign the U.N. Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

- **【Related】** ICAN campaigner Thurlow moves audience with emotional Nobel Peace Prize speech
- **【Related】** Nobel Peace Prize speech by ICAN campaigner, Hiroshima survivor Setsuko Thurlow
- **【Related】** A-bomb survivor urges N. Korea, US to never use nuclear weapons

"The government will work to influence both nuclear and non-nuclear states. The nuclear weapons ban treaty is a different approach to this," Suga stated at the Dec. 11 news conference.

Suga also praised ICAN's Nobel win, stating, "We share the same goal of eliminating nuclear arms. (The government of Japan) is very pleased that this will boost awareness and momentum for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation."

On Dec. 10, Foreign Minister Taro Kono also welcomed ICAN's Nobel honor. He added, "It is essential to steadily seek ways to advance nuclear disarmament realistically, while responding appropriately to real threats, including North Korea's nuclear and missile development programs."

Font Size

What is Japan waiting for?

December 12, 2017

EDITORIAL: World waiting for Japan to step up to the plate on anti-nuke treaty

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201712120030.html>

The International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), an alliance of nongovernmental organizations promoting a U.N. nuclear ban treaty, received this year's Nobel Peace Prize on Dec. 10 in Oslo.

The U.N. Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons would ban the use, development and possession of nuclear arms.

During the awards ceremony, a hibakusha, a survivor of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, delivered a speech for the first time.

Setsuko Thurlow, 85, who was close to ground zero on Aug. 6, 1945, recounted what she experienced on that summer day as a 13-year-old girl.

"These weapons are not a necessary evil; they are the ultimate evil," she said, urging nuclear powers to "Listen to our testimony. Heed our warning."

The leaders of all nuclear powers should pay serious and sincere attention to her message.

SENSE OF CRISIS BEHIND MOVEMENT

For the 72 years since the end of World War II, the survivors of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki have been trying hard to spread to the world the horrifying realities of the devastation caused by the bombs and the inhumane nature of nuclear weapons.

The Nobel Peace Prize awarded to ICAN also represents an international recognition of the efforts by hibakusha to push a movement toward a world free from nuclear arms.

ICAN is a coalition of more than 450 NGOs of around 100 countries. Members in their 20s and 30s have been playing the leading roles in these organizations.

They have been communicating with each other through e-mails and social media to exchange ideas for their efforts to accomplish the common mission, which transcend national borders and racial boundaries. They have all been driven by the shared perception that nuclear weapons cannot coexist with the human race.

The world should applaud ICAN's great performance as a new driver of the global efforts toward the elimination of nuclear arms.

The adoption of the nuclear ban treaty, of course, will not immediately free the world of the threat posed by nuclear arms.

But behind this movement is a strong sense of frustration about the glacial progress in nuclear arms reduction.

During the Cold War era, there were 70,000 nuclear warheads on Earth.

Under the United Nations Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), nuclear powers promised to reduce their nuclear arsenals in stages. But there has been little, if any, progress in the nuclear arms reduction talks between the United States and Russia, which together account for more than 90 percent of all the nuclear warheads that still exist, estimated at nearly 15,000.

In a speech delivered in Prague in 2009, U.S. President Barack Obama called for moves toward "a world without nuclear weapons."

Since it was a message from the leader of the nuclear-armed superpower, Obama's call raised hopes among many people in the world for actual progress in the global anti-nuclear campaign.

But their hopes were dashed in 2015, when the five-yearly NPT Review Conference fell through, failing to adopt any final document.

The United States and Russia are even working to modernize their nuclear arsenals.

MOVING BEYOND DIVISION

There can be no significant progress in nuclear disarmament if the current situation continues.

Alarmed by this grim picture, anti-nuclear groups have decided to promote fresh efforts led by non-nuclear countries instead of waiting for nuclear powers to take steps to gradually reduce their arsenals.

This sense of crisis has been the driving force of the new movement.

The Nobel Committee's decision to award the Peace Prize to ICAN should be taken as a reflection of its desire to see the trend lead to a step toward the abolition of nuclear weapons.

But there are worrisome signs that a widening rift between the nuclear powers and the rest of the world is threatening to impede progress toward the goal.

The ambassadors to Norway of the five nuclear powers--the United States, Russia, Britain, France and China--were reportedly absent from the prize-giving ceremony.

In a speech delivered at a U.N. disarmament conference in November in Hiroshima, Izumi Nakamitsu, the U.N. high representative for disarmament affairs, said there must be ways to help the nuclear ban treaty and the NPT complement each other, instead of having them conflict each other.

With these words, Nakamitsu called for efforts to promote both treaties in a mutually reinforcing way. Disagreements over the matter can and should be worked out through the sharing of opportunities to discuss related issues at forums for debate.

The process of signing and ratifying the U.N. Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons started in September. It will come into force when 50 countries have ratified it.

Only three countries have ratified the treaty to date. ICAN has set a two-year time frame for the treaty to come into effect.

ICAN is facing the formidable challenge of how to widen the scope of international support for the treaty, which will test the organization's relevance and strategic prowess.

As a first step, ICAN plans to establish a fund, partly financed by the prize money, to encourage municipal assemblies around the world to pass resolutions supporting the treaty.

Money from the fund will be used to support the activities of affiliated groups to appeal directly to the public in countries that possess nuclear arms and those dependent on a nuclear deterrent.

The success of ICAN's campaign will hinge on whether it can win broad public support for its cause in many countries that is too powerful for the governments to ignore.

JAPAN'S DUTY AS NUCLEAR-BOMBED NATION

It is regrettable that the Japanese government has been acting in a way that signals its reluctance to support the new movement toward the abolition of nuclear arms.

In October last year, the United Nations adopted a resolution calling on countries to start negotiations for the nuclear ban treaty in 2017, but Japan voted against it.

In August this year, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said in Hiroshima that Japan will not sign or ratify the nuclear ban treaty.

Indeed, the security threat posed by North Korea's nuclear and missile programs cannot be ignored.

Some say Japan should recognize the reality that it needs to be protected by U.S. nuclear weapons under the nuclear umbrella provided by the United States in an emergency.

As the only country that has ever suffered nuclear attacks in war, however, Japan has assigned itself the role of serving as a bridge between nuclear powers and non-nuclear countries.

For years, Japan has annually submitted a draft resolution calling for the elimination of nuclear arms to the United Nations. The number of countries that supported this year's draft resolution submitted by Tokyo fell sharply from last year.

Unless it changes its position, Japan could even end up being regarded as a voice for nuclear powers.

There are things Tokyo can do.

If the nuclear ban treaty comes into force, conferences of the parties to the treaty will be held. Countries that have not ratified the treaty are allowed to attend these conferences as observers.

Japan can, for instance, show its will to participate in these meetings to demonstrate its commitment to becoming involved in talks over the treaty from its unique historical position.

Countries wishing to see the world liberated from the menace of nuclear arms are waiting for Japan to step up to the plate.

--The Asahi Shimbun, Dec. 12

North Korea pledges to boost nuclear power

December 13, 2017

North Korea to boost nuclear power

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20171213_28/

North Korea's leader has pledged to strengthen his country's nuclear power both in quantity and quality. Kim Jong Un gave a speech on the closing day of a weapons industry conference.

The workers party newspaper published the text.

Kim bragged about the country completing its quest to be a nuclear power state. He says it's developed strategic weapons including hydrogen bombs and intercontinental ballistic missiles.

He thanked scientists, technicians, and others in the arms industry for their 'death-defying' struggle.

Kim added the country will win in what he called "the showdown with imperialists and the US."

Pyongyang said last month it achieved its goal of being able to strike any part of the US mainland with a nuclear-tipped missile. The US and South Korea agreed the North launched an ICBM, but experts have raised doubts it could carry a nuclear warhead.

ICAN member Kawasaki still hoping

December 15, 2017

ICAN official still hopes for Japan gov't to take lead in nuclear abolishment

<https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20171215/p2a/00m/0na/025000c>

At the ceremony awarding the Nobel Peace Prize to the International Campaign for the Abolishment of Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), A-bomb survivors, or "hibakusha," emphasized the importance of peace to the world. While the Japanese government, which falls under the protection of the United States' so-called "nuclear umbrella," commented that it shares ICAN's goals, Japan has not signed the U.N. nuclear weapons ban treaty that won the NGO its prize.

- **【Related】** ICAN member Kawasaki heads to Oslo for Nobel Peace Prize ceremony
- **【Related】** Piano that survived Hiroshima A-bomb to play at Nobel Peace Prize event in Oslo
- **【Related】** Nobel Peace Prize speech by ICAN campaigner, Hiroshima survivor Setsuko Thurlow

As the only country on earth to experience the horrors of an atomic bomb in war, what should the Japanese government's nuclear weapons policy be? The Mainichi Shimbun asked ICAN international steering committee member Akira Kawasaki for his comments:

I had the pleasure of attending the Nobel Peace Prize Award Ceremony on Dec. 10 as a member of ICAN. Along with Japan Confederation of A- and H-bomb Sufferers Organizations Co-chairperson Terumi Tanaka and Assistant Secretary General Toshiki Fujimori, some 30 elderly hibakusha made their way to Oslo for the ceremony using personal funds. Being able to transport items from the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum and hold a concert on Dec. 11 with the "hibaku (A-bombed) piano" was also incredibly memorable. The reason we have been able to come this far is thanks to the cooperation of a great deal of people.

I believe that this award is the Norwegian Nobel Committee's way of cheering on the citizens of this planet who worked to get the U.N. to adopt the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons this July to continue forward boldly. At the end of the day, ICAN is a movement, not a particular person or group. The real winners of the prize are people around the world who have tirelessly worked for many years to ban nuclear weapons.

Above all else, the hibakusha of Hiroshima and Nagasaki who have been a central part of the Japanese movement to abolish nuclear weapons have had an immense impact on the global anti-nuclear weapons movement. A testament to this was Canada-based Setsuko Thurlow, who experienced the bombing in her hometown of Hiroshima, standing alongside ICAN Executive Director Beatrice Fihn to accept the Nobel Peace Prize medal and giving a powerful speech at the award ceremony. With the simple but powerful words, "These weapons are not a necessary evil; they are the ultimate evil. ... Let this be the beginning of the end of nuclear weapons," I hope that Thurlow's passionate message captured the hearts of many.

I believe that through the ceremony, the world was once again reminded of just how important the position of Hiroshima and Nagasaki is within the anti-nuclear weapons movement. Be that as it may, the ICAN movement is not one that only looks to the past, but is also fundamentally focused on the future. Even today, the threat of nuclear weapons continues around the world in places like the Middle East, the Korean Peninsula and between India and Pakistan. This award should not be considered a "distinguished service award," but rather a "kick-off" for a new era that is only just beginning.

It's a shame that the Japanese government will not change their attitude toward the nuclear weapons ban treaty. Even though many of Japan's citizens oppose nuclear weapons, the government, with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at the center, has turned its back on the majority of the citizens of the world in the name of "nuclear deterrence." The government has said that it will serve as a bridge between nuclear and non-nuclear countries, but what bridges has it built so far? Japan should faithfully fulfill its responsibility as the only nation on earth to have experienced the horrors of nuclear weapons in war.

With tensions surrounding North Korea, some young people may have the vague sense that Japan being under the nuclear umbrella of the United States just can't be helped. But I urge them to go visit Hiroshima or Nagasaki, and meet the hibakusha. There are still 160,000 survivors who can tell of their experiences of the bombs.

At the end of November in Hiroshima, a government-sponsored meeting of the Group of Eminent Persons for Substantive Advancement of Nuclear Disarmament was held. During a discussion among experts and NGOs, we conveyed to the Japanese government our wish that it not stand in the way of the nuclear weapons ban treaty. The meeting was sponsored by former Minister of Foreign Affairs and Hiroshima-native Fumio Kishida.

At the very least, I would like to see the government show that it is headed in the direction of nuclear arms reduction. Japan needs to use its diplomatic power as the only country to have experienced nuclear bombings to make a difference before it's too late. I haven't given up hope just yet.

Turning down recognition of A-bomb victims

December 18, 2017

Top court dismisses A-bomb victim recognition suit

<https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20171218/p2g/00m/0dm/064000c>

TOKYO (Kyodo) -- The Supreme Court on Monday rejected a suit filed by people who were in the vicinity of Nagasaki at the time of the 1945 U.S. atomic bombing and seeking official recognition as atomic bomb survivors.

While turning down recognition of the 387 people as victims, the top court found one plaintiff who died after the suit was lodged could have been exposed to radiation after entering areas affected by the attack and sent his case back to the Nagasaki District Court.

The plaintiffs, who claimed they were within 12 kilometers of ground zero at the time of the atomic bomb attack on Aug. 9, 1945, are not classified as survivors, or hibakusha in Japanese, because they were outside the oval-shaped, state-designated zone stretching around 7 km from east to west and around 12 km from north to south.

Instead, they are defined as individuals "who experienced the bombing," and are not therefore entitled to full compensation including medical assistance as hibakusha are. As of late November, 6,278 such individuals who experienced the bombing lived in Nagasaki Prefecture, according to the prefectural government.

The top court's First Petty Bench presided by Justice Katsuyuki Kizawa upheld a 2016 Fukuoka High Court ruling which said an earlier scientific finding that radiation-linked health problems basically occurred within a 5-km range from ground zero was appropriate.

"I'm so disappointed and dumbfounded by the top court decision," said Chiyoko Iwanaga, 81, who leads the plaintiffs. "Although we are getting old and exhausted, I will keep challenging. The truth can't be bent." In the suit filed in 2007, the plaintiffs had requested the central, Nagasaki prefectural and city governments issue health cards that entitle them to full compensation including medical assistance under a law supporting atomic bomb victims.

They also insisted they developed acute symptoms such as hair loss after exposure to the blast and still suffer from diseases related to radiation. But the top court upheld a 2012 Nagasaki District Court ruling that concluded the symptoms did not match those stemming from radiation exposure.

Under the law to provide support to atomic bomb victims, people are legally recognized as hibakusha if they were in the state-designated zone at the time of the atomic bombing, entered the city within two weeks of the attack, or were otherwise exposed to radiation from the explosion.

All of the plaintiffs argued they fall into the third category, while the man who died during the lawsuit demanded his case be classified as the second.

Pope Francis uses Nagasaki photo to warn against war

January 2, 2018

Pope issues anti-war photo featuring victims of Nagasaki atomic bombing

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2018/01/02/national/pope-issues-anti-war-photo-featuring-victims-nagasaki-atomic-bombing/#.WktBwHkiGic>

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BERLIN – Pope Francis has issued a card showing a 1945 photo of victims of the U.S. atomic bombing of Nagasaki in a warning against war.

According to the media reports, the Pope asked that the card be distributed with the words “the fruit of war” written on the back.

The photo captures a boy carrying his dead brother on his shoulders while waiting in line at a crematorium.

A portion of the photo’s caption says the young boy’s sadness is expressed only in his gesture of biting his lips. The photo was reported to have been taken by a U.S. military photographer.

The atomic bomb was dropped on Aug. 9, 1945, in the closing days of World War II, three days after the U.S. atomic bombing of Hiroshima.

Gorbachev on the importance of preserving disarmament agreements

January 6, 2018

Gorbachev urges Putin, Trump to uphold Cold War-era nuke arms pact

<https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20180106/p2g/00m/0in/088000c>

MOSCOW (Kyodo) -- Former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev has urged the Russian and U.S. leaders to resolve a dispute over a nuclear arms control treaty he signed with Washington 30 years ago, warning that a breakdown of the landmark pact could lead the entire international disarmament framework to “collapse.”

“Now the task of preserving disarmament agreements is one of the most important,” said Gorbachev, 86, who signed the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles, known as the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF treaty), with then U.S. President Ronald Reagan in December 1987, in a move that led to the end of the Cold War.

The 1990 Nobel Peace Prize laureate made the remarks in a recent written response to Kyodo News as tensions between Russia and the United States run high, with the two nuclear superpowers accusing each other of violating the INF treaty, which calls for destruction of ground-based intermediate and shorter-range nuclear missiles with a range capability of 500 kilometers to 5,500 km.

Gorbachev said the international nuclear disarmament treaties -- the INF treaty, the new Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, or the New START, and the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, or NPT -- “all are parts of a single architecture that can collapse if one of its elements is undermined.”

"I still hope that the leaders of our countries have enough wisdom to prevent this," the last leader of the Soviet Union said. "I urged the presidents of Russia and the U.S. to tackle the problem personally; to reaffirm commitments to the treaty, and to instruct diplomats and militaries to solve the problems." Over the INF treaty, the administration of U.S. President Donald Trump announced in March 2017 that it has confirmed the deployment of a new type of Russian ground-launched missile in a violation of the pact. On Dec. 8, the 30th anniversary of the signing of the treaty, the State Department said that it will pursue a "review of military concepts and options, including options for conventional, ground-launched, intermediate-range missile systems" as a countermeasure to Russia's treaty violation. Russia, for its part, argues that the deployment of the U.S. land-based Aegis Ashore missile defense system in Romania and the planned implementation in Japan violate the treaty. Russian President Vladimir Putin said on Dec. 14 that Washington "has already withdrawn from (the treaty) de facto." Gorbachev signaled that Russia and the United States, which together possess more than 90 percent of the nuclear weapons in the world, should lead efforts toward a world without nuclear weapons. "We must not forget that the movement towards a world without nuclear weapons is the most important obligation of the nuclear powers enshrined in the Non-Proliferation Treaty," Gorbachev said. The INF treaty was signed on Dec. 8, 1987, following the launch of negotiations in November 1981 amid heightened tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union stemming from the threats posed by intermediate-range nuclear missiles deployed in Europe. Gorbachev said that the INF treaty, which became the first agreement between the two superpowers on the elimination of deployed nuclear weapons, was "the most important document in the closing period of the Cold War." He also noted that the treaty helped reduce fear and anxiety in Europe and Asia, including Japan, over the presence of nuclear missiles. The INF pact required the destruction of U.S. and Soviet ground-launched ballistic and cruise missiles with a range capability between 500 and 5,500 km, and their associated launchers, support structures, and equipment, within three years after the treaty entered into force in June 1988. Under the treaty, the two countries eliminated a total of 2,692 missiles by 1991. It also introduced a verification regime, which was the "most detailed and stringent in the history of nuclear arms control" at the time the treaty was signed, according to the State Department.

Denuclearisation of Korean peninsula US Govt's top priority

January 10, 2018

US says next steps are denuclearization

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20180110_12/

A White House spokesperson has suggested that the US government would like to see denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula as the next steps following North Korea's participation in the Olympics in South Korea.

Speaking to reporters on Tuesday, Press Secretary Sarah Sanders called the North Korean participation "an opportunity for the regime to see the value of ending its international isolation by denuclearizing."

She added that denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula is the US government's number-one priority and

what it would like to see as the next steps.

US State Department spokesperson Heather Nauert said the United States welcomes Tuesday's inter-Korean meeting aimed at ensuring a safe, secure, and successful Winter Olympics.

But she also said the US and South Korean presidents agree to continue the campaign of maximum pressure on North Korea toward the goal of complete and verifiable denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres welcomed the inter-Korean agreement to hold military-to-military talks and reopen the military hotline. He said the re-establishment of such channels would be critical to lowering the risk of miscalculation or misunderstanding.

The UN chief welcomed North Korea's decision to send a delegation to the Olympics, and said the holding of the Games can foster an atmosphere of peace, tolerance and understanding among nations. He also said he hopes such engagement and efforts will contribute to the resumption of sincere dialogue leading to sustainable peace and denuclearization on the Korean Peninsula.

Nuclear weapons: What now?



January 9, 2018

Nuclear arms: Look ahead to 2018 in hope, not back at 2017 in anger

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2018/01/09/commentary/world-commentary/nuclear-arms-look-ahead-2018-hope-not-back-2017-anger/#.WlXiy3kiGos>

by Ramesh Thakur

CANBERRA – We begin 2018 with a surreal contest between U.S. President Donald Trump and North Korea's Kim Jong Un as to whose nuclear button is bigger. Against North Korea's anxiety-inducing rapid nuclear advances, the biggest positive story line of 2017 was a new United Nations nuclear ban treaty adopted on July 7 and opened for signature on Sept. 20.

It strengthens the norms of nonproliferation and those against nuclear testing, reaffirms the disarmament norm, rejects the nuclear deterrence norm and articulates a new universal norm against possession. Once in force, it will become part of the legal architecture for disarmament and all countries must adjust to this new institutional reality. It will reshape how the world community thinks about and acts in relation to nuclear weapons and those who possess the bomb.

For Australia, Japan and other allies of the United States, nuclear disarmament is of lower priority than indefinitely bolstering and sustaining the legitimacy and credibility of nuclear deterrence. Their instinct is to support incremental, verifiable and enforceable agreements and commitments, but there is no detailed framework for actual elimination, verification and enforcement in the ban treaty. Consequently, they insist, the treaty will neither promote global nuclear disarmament nor strengthen national security.

It is, nonetheless, a good-faith effort by 122 countries to act on their responsibility under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) to take effective measures on nuclear disarmament at an early date. To critics of nuclear deterrence, the nuclear powers are not so much possessor as possessed countries. Within the security paradigm, nuclear weapons are national assets for the possessor countries individually. In the ban treaty's humanitarian reframing, they are a collective international hazard.

The step-by-step approach adopts a transactional strategy to move incrementally without disturbing the existing security order. The ban treaty's transformative approach transcends the limitations imposed by national and international security arguments. The known humanitarian consequences of any future use makes the very possibility of nuclear war unacceptable. Dispossession of nuclear weapons now would remove that future possibility.

The ban treaty is a circuit breaker in the search for a dependable, rules-based security order outside the limits of what the nuclear-armed countries are prepared to accept. The nuclear powers have instrumentalized the NPT to legitimize their own indefinite possession of nuclear weapons while enforcing nonproliferation on anyone else pushing to join their exclusive club. For them, the problem is who has the bomb. But for anti-nuclear advocates, increasingly the bomb itself is the problem.

The ban treaty has created a new political reality that will require managing domestic demands and expectations, and national security calculations. As long as nuclear weapons are integral to its mission, NATO membership cannot be compatible with the core obligations of the ban treaty. Hitherto, nuclear deterrence has been privileged absolutely over calls for disarmament. But significant domestic constituencies in several alliance members will continue to demand signature of the ban treaty and the only credible route to defusing their demands will be to demonstrate continued concrete progress on nuclear disarmament.

The lead role in civil society was played by the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN). Nuclear weapons are uniquely destructive and hence uniquely threatening to all our security. ICAN was established in the belief that there is a compelling need to challenge and overcome the reigning

complacency toward nuclear risks and dangers, to sensitize policy communities to the urgency and gravity of the nuclear threats and the availability of non-nuclear alternatives as anchors of national and international security orders.

ICAN, launched in Melbourne in April 2007, was modeled on the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL), which had won the Nobel Peace Prize in recognition of its lead role in mobilizing civil society and like-minded governments. The transformation of anti-nuclear movements into coalitions of change requires a similar shift from street protest to engagement with politics and policy. That is exactly what ICAN did as a global coalition of over 450 organizations in more than 100 countries. It won the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize in recognition of its decadelong “ground-breaking efforts to achieve a treaty-based prohibition” of nuclear weapons by drawing “attention to the catastrophic consequences of any use” of these weapons.

The Nobel will help to raise the global profile of ICAN, the ban treaty and the cause of nuclear disarmament. Henceforth the ICAN-led effort is likely to focus on four immediate, medium and long-term priorities: The first is to increase the number of signatories to the full 122 states that adopted the treaty in the historic vote last July at the U.N. The second urgent goal will be to lobby at least 50 signatory states to ratify the treaty. While this will be sufficient to bring the treaty legally into force, the key psychological threshold for generating normative impact will be 100 ratifications, so that should be the third task.

A fourth priority should be to wean some of the NATO and Pacific allies from their dependence on extended nuclear deterrence into signing the ban treaty. There are three groups of states on which ICAN should concentrate its efforts. The first is the usual cohort of like-minded internationally progressive states, such as Canada and Norway, that have historically acted together on progressive causes, especially arms control. International pressure will be less efficacious than identifying and accessing points of pressure within the domestic politics of each country: mobilize the citizens, identify the political parties and candidates most receptive to the prohibition message, then support their campaigns. The next will be allies who have traditionally formed the anti-nuclear front within NATO as a nuclear alliance, for example Germany and Canada.

The third category is the singular example of Japan as the only country to have been the victim of nuclear weapons with a solid anti-nuclear public constituency as a result. The government’s policy of opposition to the ban treaty is more sharply out of alignment with public opinion in Japan than in any other country. Given Prime Minister Shinzo Abe’s seemingly unassailable dominance in Japan’s political landscape, this gives opposition politicians and parties one major point of differentiation with the ruling party that will be popular with the citizens.

Ramesh Thakur is director of the Centre for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament and a professor in the Crawford School of Public Policy

ICAN calls on Japan to join Treaty on nuclear weapons

January 14, 2018

ICAN chief calls on Japan to join treaty banning nuclear weapons

<https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20180114/p2g/00m/0fp/001000c>

NAGASAKI (Kyodo) -- The leader of the antinuclear group International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, which won last year's Nobel Peace Prize, on Saturday called on Japan to take part in the treaty banning nuclear weapons.

- **【Related】** ICAN official still hopes for Japan gov't to take lead in nuclear abolishment
- **【Related】** Editorial: Nobel Peace Prize a chance to rethink Japan's response to nuclear ban treaty

In a keynote speech at a symposium in Nagasaki, one of two atomic-bombed cities, ICAN Executive Director Beatrice Fihn criticized the Japanese government for not joining the treaty banning nuclear weapons, adopted by 122 U.N. members in July.

"The Japanese government should know better than any other nation the consequences of nuclear weapons, yet Tokyo is happy to live under the umbrella of U.S. nuclear protection, and has not joined the treaty to prohibit nuclear weapons," Fihn said. "Is your government okay with repeating the evil that was done to Nagasaki and Hiroshima to other cities?"

Japan sat out the treaty negotiations, as did the world's nuclear-armed countries and others relying on the deterrence of the U.S. nuclear umbrella.

Japan remains the only country to have sustained wartime atomic bombings, over 72 years after the U.S. bombing of Hiroshima on Aug. 6, 1945, and of Nagasaki three days later.

Fihn said as long as the Japanese government believes in the effect of deterrence from the U.S. nuclear umbrella, it means encouraging nuclear proliferation and along with other nations living under the protection of nuclear alliances, it is moving the world closer toward the eventual use of nuclear weapons. "It is unacceptable to be a willing participant in this nuclear umbrella," she said.

The executive director of the international group campaigning for a total ban on nuclear weapons, meanwhile, applauded atomic bomb survivors, or hibakusha, for their efforts to speak out not to repeat the tragedy.

"The nuclear ban treaty would not exist without the hibakusha," she said.

At a panel discussion held after the speech, Nobuharu Imanishi, director of the Japanese Foreign Ministry's Arms Control and Disarmament Division, said Japan is facing a "severe security environment" given North Korea's nuclear and missile development.

"Joining the treaty would damage the legitimacy of nuclear deterrence provided by the United States," he said.

In responding to his remarks, Fihn called on symposium visitors to put more pressure on politicians through grassroots activities to have them change the nuclear policy.

She has requested that the Japanese government set up a meeting with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe during her stay in Japan.

Asked at a press conference about what she would like to tell the prime minister if she can meet him, Fihn said she wants to ask Abe to show leadership in the movement for nuclear disarmament as the leader of the only country to have been attacked with nuclear weapons.

Abe is currently on a six-nation European tour through Wednesday.

ICAN chief visits Nagasaki

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20180113_24/

The head of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons says Japan must be a leader in the global movement for nuclear disarmament.

Beatrice Fihn, director of the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize laureate ICAN, is making her first visit to Nagasaki, the second Japanese city to have been targeted by an atomic bomb in August, 1945.

Fihn travelled to a park near ground zero with a member of ICAN's International Steering Group, Akira Kawasaki, on Saturday. She laid flowers in front of a monument and prayed for the victims.

She visited the Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum where she saw items that belonged to victims as well as photographs of people who were burnt.

Fihn then attended an event on the theme of the UN treaty prohibiting nuclear weapons.

In a speech, she said nuclear weapons "are the paradox that promises peace by proposing destruction. It is a dangerous balance that cannot hold forever."

Fihn said having experienced the atomic bombings, Japan has a moral obligation to lead the world toward nuclear disarmament, and participate in the treaty.

In a panel discussion that followed, an official from the foreign ministry said it would be difficult for Japan to join the treaty under the current security environment, including the threat posed by North Korea.

Fihn pointed out that there is no country that is not exposed to nuclear threat, and that the Japanese government must agree to the treaty.

But what are "extreme circumstances"?

January 14, 2018

Trump's nuclear strategy seeks new weapons to counter Russia, a cause of concern for some critics

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2018/01/14/world/politics-diplomacy-world/trumps-nuclear-strategy-seeks-new-weapons-counter-russia-cause-concern-critics/#.WluUjHkiGos>

AP, Reuters

WASHINGTON – With Russia in mind, the Trump administration is aiming to develop new nuclear firepower that it says will make it easier to deter threats to European allies.

The plan, not yet approved by U.S. President Donald Trump, is intended to make nuclear conflict less likely. Critics argue it would do the opposite.

The proposal is spelled out in a policy document, known officially as a "nuclear posture review," that puts the U.S. in a generally more aggressive nuclear stance. It is the first review of its kind since 2010 and is among several studies of security strategy undertaken since Trump took office.

In many ways it reaffirms the nuclear policy of President Barack Obama, including his commitment to replace all key elements of the nuclear arsenal with new, more modern weapons over the coming two decades.

It says the U.S. will adhere to existing arms control agreements, while expressing doubt about prospects for any new such pacts. The Trump nuclear doctrine is expected to be published in early February, followed by a related policy on the role and development of U.S. defenses against ballistic missiles. Where the Trump doctrine splits from Obama's approach is in ending his push to reduce the role of nuclear weapons in U.S. defense policy. Like Obama, Trump would consider using nuclear weapons only in "extreme circumstances," while maintaining a degree of ambiguity about what that means. But Trump sees a fuller deterrent role for these weapons, as reflected in the plan to develop new capabilities to counter Russia in Europe.

The Huffington Post published online a draft of the nuclear policy report Thursday, and The Associated Press independently obtained a copy Friday. Asked for comment, the Pentagon called it a "pre-decisional," unfinished document yet to be reviewed and approved by Trump, who ordered it a year ago.

Russia, and to a degree China, are outlined as nuclear policy problems that demand a tougher approach. The administration's view is that Russian policies and actions are fraught with potential for miscalculation leading to an uncontrolled escalation of conflict in Europe. It specifically points to a Russian doctrine known as "escalate to de-escalate," in which Moscow would use or threaten to use smaller-yield nuclear weapons in a limited, conventional conflict in Europe in the belief that doing so would compel the U.S. and NATO to back down.

The administration proposes a two-step solution.

First, it would modify "a small number" of existing long-range ballistic missiles carried by Trident strategic submarines to fit them with smaller-yield nuclear warheads.

Secondly, "in the longer term," it would develop a nuclear-armed sea-launched cruise missile — re-establishing a weapon that existed during the Cold War but was retired in 2011 by the Obama administration.

Together, these steps are meant to further dissuade "regional aggression," which means giving Russia greater pause in using limited nuclear strikes.

Interest in the condition and role of U.S. nuclear weapons has grown as North Korea develops its own nuclear arsenal it says is aimed at the U.S.

The Trump administration views the North Korean threats, along with what it sees as provocative nuclear rhetoric from Russia, as evidence that security conditions no longer support the idea that the U.S. can rely less on nuclear weapons or further limit their role in national defense.

The nuclear report also makes rare mention of a newer Russian weapon: a nuclear-armed drone torpedo that could travel undersea to far-off targets.

Hans Kristensen, a nuclear weapons specialist at the Federation of American Scientists, questions whether the administration is overstating the Russian threat and responding with the right solution. But he said it is clear that Moscow has raised fears in the West by its aggression in Ukraine.

"Clearly, the Russia situation is much more of a direct confrontational situation," he said. "The gloves are off."

Bruce Blair, a former nuclear missile launch officer who co-founded Global Zero, which advocates the elimination of nuclear weapons, called the report "basically a status quo document" except for the plan to develop new nuclear options for countering Russia. He worries these could lead the U.S. into "blundering into a nuclear war with Russia." Blair based his comments partly on knowledge of the report's content before it appeared online.

“The Pentagon’s underlying motivation,” Blair said, “is **fear of Russia’s new option for striking U.S. and Western European civilian infrastructure — financial, energy, transportation and communications — with cyber and conventional forces.**”

Moscow developed this doctrine in recent years to exploit vulnerabilities in vital Western infrastructure, such as communications networks, he said. This falls into a category of threat the Trump administration calls “nonnuclear strategic,” meaning it could inflict unacceptably high numbers of casualties or costs. Authors of the Trump nuclear doctrine argue that adding new U.S. nuclear capabilities to deter Russia in Europe will lessen, not increase, the risk of war. They worry the nuclear-capable aircraft that are currently the only Europe-based nuclear force to counter Russia have become less credible, in part because they may be vulnerable to Russian air defenses. Thus, the focus on adding sea-launched U.S. nuclear weapons to the mix.

“This is not intended to, nor does it, enable ‘nuclear war-fighting,’ ” the draft report said. Instead, the goal is to make nuclear conflict less likely by ensuring that “potential adversaries” see no possible advantage in escalating a conventional conflict to the nuclear level.

Michaela Dodge, senior policy analyst at the Heritage Foundation, said **the draft document appeared to be intentionally ambiguous about when and how the United States might retaliate, to better deter adversaries.**

“If we are explicit about saying (when) we will not retaliate with the strongest weapons we have, we are implicitly telling our adversaries you can plan for these scenarios more freely,” Dodge said.

Nuclear response to cyberattacks

January 17, 2018

Pentagon mulls nuclear response to cyberattacks: report

<http://thehill.com/policy/defense/369283-pentagon-mulls-nuclear-response-to-cyber-attacks-report>

By Max Greenwood - 01/17/18 08:10 AM EST 76

A Pentagon report outlining an updated U.S. nuclear strategy suggests using nuclear weapons to respond to non-nuclear attacks on the U.S., according to The New York Times

The newspaper reported Wednesday that the draft document, the Nuclear Posture Review, provides for possible nuclear responses to devastating cyberattacks on U.S critical infrastructure.

The suggestion marks a dramatic expansion of what the U.S. believes warrants a first use of nuclear weapons, the Times noted. Only in narrow cases, such as in the event of a biological attack on the U.S., has Washington suggested that it could respond with nuclear force.

The U.S. typically views the use of nuclear weapons as appropriate in extreme circumstances. But the review expands the definition of what constitutes an extreme circumstance to “include significant non-nuclear strategic attacks,” according to the Times.

That could include massive cyberattacks, it said.

Current and former U.S. officials told the newspaper that while the report includes a massive cyberattack among the actions that could warrant a nuclear response, there remain other, more-conventional plans for responding to such attacks.

A draft version of the Nuclear Posture Review, which was commissioned by President Trump last year, was first published by HuffPost last week, though the Pentagon has dismissed that draft as “pre-decisional.”

The White House is currently reviewing the report, which provides recommendations for modernizing the U.S. nuclear strategy.

ICAN leader meets with Japanese lawmakers

January 16, 2018

ICAN leader meets with Japan's lawmakers

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20180116_35/

The head of a prominent anti-nuclear group has called on Japan to join the treaty to ban nuclear weapons.

ICAN Executive Director Beatrice Fihn said, "Japan is the only country to directly know the humanitarian, economic, and social costs of nuclear war."

The International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, or ICAN, won the Nobel Peace Prize last year for its efforts to help get the treaty adopted. It had the support of more than 120 countries and territories.

But the nuclear powers are opposed to it. So is Japan, which relies on the American nuclear umbrella for protection.

Japanese State Minister for Foreign Affairs Masahisa Sato said, "Considering the severe security situation surrounding Japan, including threats from North Korea, it's essential to maintain the deterrence that the Japan-US alliance provides."

But some senior members of Japan's opposition parties are more open to discussing ICAN's position.

Tetsuro Fukuyama of the Constitutional Democratic Party said, "It would be good for Japan to study the effects that the nuclear weapons ban treaty may have. Our party plans to raise this issue at the Diet for discussion."

Fihn visited Nagasaki and Hiroshima before meeting with lawmakers in Tokyo. She said she hopes there will be more debate on the treaty among the Japanese people.

Fihn said, "I've experienced that there's a large gap between the values represented in Nagasaki and Hiroshima and the policy coming out of Tokyo.

We need action and leadership of this city and the world needs you, the citizens of this city and this country, to demand it."

"Does Abe understand the significance of ICAN winning the Nobel Peace Prize?"



January 16, 2018

ICAN chief meets activists in Hiroshima

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20180116_03/

The head of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, or ICAN, has met with anti-nuclear activists in Hiroshima.

ICAN Executive Director Beatrice Fihn attended a meeting of about 150 people from the atomic-bombed city on Monday.

The event began with a speech by Haruko Moritaki, who co-heads a Hiroshima non-governmental organization.

She said she is counting on the youthful power of ICAN to spread around the world the voices of Hiroshima and the consequences of atomic bombing.

She said non-governmental groups in Hiroshima need to work together to urge Japan's government to join the UN nuclear ban treaty.

Fihn told the audience there is a "large gap" between what people in Hiroshima and Nagasaki believe, and Japanese government policy.

She said the threat of nuclear weapons would continue as long as Tokyo believes in nuclear deterrence.

She added citizens should unite to demand change.

A high school student also delivered a speech, stressing the need to create occasions to make the younger generations think about the nuclear ban treaty.

Moritaki said she wants young Japanese people to take hope and inspiration from ICAN and actively engage in its campaign.

Fihn's organization won last year's Nobel Peace Prize for its contribution to the adoption of the nuclear ban treaty at the United Nations.

A-bomb survivors question denial of ICAN leader's request for meeting with Abe

<https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20180116/p2a/00m/0na/011000c>

<https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20180116/p2a/00m/0na/011000c>

Beatrice Fihn, executive director of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), the international nongovernmental organization that won last year's Nobel Peace Prize, was denied a meeting with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe during her current visit to Japan in spite of her request for one, on the grounds of scheduling difficulties.

- **【Related】** Chief of Nobel-winning antinuke group denied a meeting with PM Abe
- **【Related】** ICAN chief Fihn visits Hiroshima, speaks to A-bomb survivor
- **【Related】** ICAN chief calls on Japan to join treaty banning nuclear weapons

ICAN was instrumental in the adoption of the United Nations Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. Japan has not signed this treaty, but even so, calls have arisen from within Japan, the only country to have been attacked with nuclear weapons in warfare, for the prime minister to meet and talk with the ICAN leader.

Prime Minister Abe is scheduled to return from a trip to Eastern Europe on Jan. 17. Fihn arrived in Japan on Jan. 12, is staying in Tokyo on Jan. 16 and 17, and will leave Japan on Jan. 18. Speaking to reporters after a tour of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum in Hiroshima on Jan. 15, she expressed disappointment that she had been denied a chance to meet Prime Minister Abe even though she had been able to meet the leaders of other countries. She noted that Japan, in particular, had been subjected to A-bomb attacks in the past, and said she was keen to talk with the prime minister and figures in the Japanese government. Fihn added she looks forward to a meeting at the next opportunity.

The same day, Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga said in a news conference that denial of the meeting came down to "the fact that it was difficult in terms of schedules, nothing more, nothing less."

ICAN had sent the Cabinet Office two written requests since December last year asking for a meeting between Fihn and the prime minister during her stay in Tokyo. Abe has met Nobel laureates from abroad in the past, including economists Paul Krugman in 2014, Robert Merton in 2015, and Joseph Stiglitz in 2016.

The U.N. Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons bans the use, development, testing, production, stationing and stockpiling of nuclear weapons, as well as the threat of their use -- the basis of nuclear deterrence. The accord was adopted in the United Nations in July last year with the majority approval of 122 countries. However, Japan, which is under the protection of the U.S. "nuclear umbrella," did not take part in treaty negotiations.

Fumiko Nishizaki, a professor at the University of Tokyo versed in diplomatic history, commented, "The Japanese government has stressed that its final goal is the elimination of nuclear weapons, and it would be normal to respond to a Nobel laureate with respect.

Adopting the stance of listening to an organization with conflicting views would have raised the profile of the administration, so this is a regrettable decision."

Meanwhile, Tomoyuki Mimaki, 75, representative director of the Japan Confederation of A- and H-bomb Sufferers Organizations (Nihon Hidankyo), voiced distrust toward the government. "I'm disappointed in the prime minister," he said. "Does the government really think that being under the 'nuclear umbrella' is the best thing?"

Koichi Kawano, 78, chairman of the Japan Congress Against A- and H-Bombs, commented, "I guess that the prime minister can't confidently give a reason for not participating in the treaty. As an A-bombed country, Japan should be offering a congratulatory message for (ICAN's winning of) the Nobel Peace Prize, but instead it's fleeing without any message."

Masao Tomonaga, 74, honorary director of The Japanese Red Cross Nagasaki Genbaku Hospital, commented, "If scheduling is the issue, then it can't be helped, but the important thing is whether the government accepts Ms. Fihn's message or not."

Both Kawano and Tomonaga are survivors of the Nagasaki atomic bombing.

January 15, 2018

Chief of Nobel-winning antinuke group denied a meeting with PM Abe

https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20180115/p2g/00m/0dm/060000c#cxrecs_s

HIROSHIMA (Kyodo) -- The leader of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, which won last year's Nobel Peace Prize, has been denied a meeting with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, Japanese nongovernmental organization Peace Boat said Monday.

ICAN asked the Japanese government twice since late December to arrange a meeting between Abe and Executive Director Beatrice Fihn during her ongoing visit to Japan, but the Foreign Ministry declined the request, citing a scheduling conflict, according to Peace Boat, a major steering group member of the Geneva-based organization.

Expressing disappointment that she would be unable to meet Abe during her first visit to Japan, Fihn said in Hiroshima she wants to talk with him about how the world can avoid a repeat of the devastation inflicted on Hiroshima and Nagasaki -- the two cities atom-bombed by the United States in 1945.

Fihn added she looks forward to meeting with the Japanese prime minister at the next opportunity.

Atomic-bomb survivors, known as hibakusha in Japan, expressed their disappointment.

"Does Prime Minister Abe understand the significance of ICAN winning the Nobel Peace Prize? It is very regrettable to feel this difference of attitudes between the government and atomic-bomb survivors," said Hiroko Kishida, a 77-year-old hibakusha.

Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga, however, told media in Tokyo that a meeting was not arranged "due to a conflict of schedule. Nothing more, nothing less."

Abe departed Japan on Friday for a six-nation European tour and is set to return home on Wednesday.

Fihn arrived in Japan on the same day as Abe's departure.

After visiting Nagasaki through Sunday, she delivered a keynote speech at an event held Monday in Hiroshima where some 340 people, including students and survivors of the atomic bombing, gathered.

She said there are divergent views on the U.N. nuke ban treaty between the people who live at the sites of the atomic bombs and the Japanese government and the gap in understanding must be narrowed, stressing all countries' participation in the treaty will be key to resolving the nuclear weapons issue.

In Hiroshima, Fihn laid flowers at the Peace Memorial Park's Cenotaph and listened to the testimony of 80-year-old hibakusha Keiko Ogura.

Fihn is scheduled to hold discussions with Japanese parliamentarians in Tokyo on Tuesday before leaving Japan on Thursday.

ICAN, founded in 2007, is a coalition of NGOs that involves about 470 groups from more than 100 countries.

ICAN urges Japanese citizens to push for nuclear ban

January 17, 2018

ICAN: Japan's people should push for nuclear ban

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20180117_01/

The head of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons says the Japanese people should unite to urge their government to join the nuclear ban treaty. ICAN won last year's Nobel Peace Prize.

ICAN Executive Director Beatrice Fihn made the appeal on Tuesday in a lecture in Tokyo that was attended by about 200 people. She has visited Hiroshima and Nagasaki since she arrived in Japan last Thursday.

Fihn said that if citizens are united in one clear voice, it will be impossible for the Japanese government to ignore them. She said ICAN wants to use the energy, passion and hope of the Japanese people.

Fihn also mentioned last Saturday's false missile alert in Hawaii. She said mothers, fathers, sons and daughters said goodbye to their loved ones, and waited in terror.

A student who attended the lecture said people must raise their voices to change the Japanese government's policy.

Imagine Trump with new, more usable nuclear weapons

January 17, 2018

Give Trump new nukes and we are that much closer to war

<http://thehill.com/opinion/national-security/369248-give-trump-new-nukes-and-we-are-that-much-closer-to-war>

By Tom Z. Collina, opinion contributor — 01/17/18 09:00 AM EST 41

It's bad enough that President Donald Trump has absolute authority to launch the vast U.S. nuclear arsenal and effectively end the world as we know it.

And it's bad enough that President Trump, ignoring decades of presidential restraint, makes childish nuclear threats over Twitter, boasting that his "nuclear button" is "much bigger & more powerful" than North Korea's.

It's also bad enough that, over the weekend, we were reminded that false alarms of nuclear attack happen. They have happened before and will happen again. If Trump had chosen to respond to this alarm, he could have started World War III — by mistake.

Now imagine President Trump with new, more "usable" nuclear weapons, and more options to use them. Scary, but true. The Trump administration is about to wander far outside the mainstream of nuclear policy and into the wilderness — and in the process, make nuclear war more likely.

The Trump administration plans to release its Nuclear Posture Review at the end of this month. It's not yet public, but it has been leaked. The Pentagon dismissed the draft as "pre-decisional" and Trump still has to approve it, but barring last minute changes, it's not pretty.

Most alarmingly, the administration wants to build two new types of nuclear weapons that — get this — it suggests are more likely to be used. Both types, a ballistic missile and a cruise missile, would be deployed at sea and would have a lower explosive yield than some others, but that does not make them any less dangerous. In fact, the administration says it wants these new weapons so it can make more credible nuclear threats and "enhance deterrence."

Let's unpack this a bit. There are some in the Trump camp who believe that U.S. nuclear weapons are so powerful (over 100 kilotons) that the president is self-deterred from using them given the horrific damage they would cause. So they would like new nukes with lower yields (say 10 kilotons, about the size of the Hiroshima bomb) to make Trump's threats to use them more "credible."

This is senseless, dangerous, and redundant. There is no evidence — zero — that other nations, such as Russia or North Korea, believe that they can take advantage of the United States because we would not retaliate with the 5,000 nuclear bombs we have. In fact, the best way to undermine U.S. credibility in this area is to build new lower yield nukes, and thereby admit we are not willing to use the bigger ones. This is self-defeating logic.

Moreover, there is a built-in assumption that if we use "small" bombs we might be able to prevent a conflict from spiraling into full-scale nuclear war. But that is nonsense. As Deputy Defense Secretary Robert Work testified in 2015:

"Anyone who thinks they can control escalation through the use of nuclear weapons is literally playing with fire. Escalation is escalation, and nuclear use would be the ultimate escalation."

Building new, low-yield nukes dangerously lowers the threshold for their use.

But even if you think that there is a role for more usable nukes, we already have 1,000 of them, and are building new ones. The B61 gravity bomb, currently under renovation for \$10 billion, has a variable yield

as low as one-third of a kiloton. The new air-launched cruise missile (as much as \$30 billion) can go as low as five kilotons. None of these weapons are needed.

Even so, the Trump administration would like to replace some of the high-yield warheads on submarine-launched Trident missiles with lower-yield ones. This would be expensive and undermine the security of the submarines. These boats cost billions of dollars each and are designed to hide beneath the oceans as an assured ability to respond to any nuclear attack. Would we really launch a low-yield nuke early in a conflict and thereby endanger the submarine and its remaining weapons and crew?

Trump also wants to bring back the nuclear sea-launched cruise missile. This weapon was retired by President George H.W. Bush at the end of the Cold War as part of his bold plan to remove all nuclear weapons from navy ships. This bipartisan move still makes sense today. So-called tactical nuclear weapons have no real military value but could lead to accidental nuclear war. Nuclear-armed cruise missiles cannot be distinguished from conventional ones, so in a conflict an adversary may mistakenly believe it is under nuclear attack. Bad plan. There is no longer any reason to bear this risk.

Congress has a key role to play here. Trump's new nukes would need to be built and paid for. Congress can withhold funding — and should.

But wait, there's more. The administration wants to create new opportunities for Trump to use nuclear weapons, including using them first. The Obama administration had moved to limit the use of nuclear weapons to only deter nuclear attacks against the United States or its allies, as opposed to using nukes to counter chemical, biological or conventional weapons. But the Trump administration wants to expand the role of nukes to respond to "non-nuclear strategic attacks," possibly include cyber attacks. As a result, we could have President Trump launching a first strike nuclear attack over the next Russian or North Korean computer hack.

This is simply dangerous. "The entire broadening of the landscape for nuclear deterrence is a very fundamental step in the wrong direction, a really bad one," former Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz said at an event hosted by the Center for Strategic and Intentional Studies last week. "I think the idea of nuclear deterrence of cyber attacks, broadly, certainly does not make any sense."

President Trump does not appreciate that a nuke is not just another weapon, but bigger. We should not give Trump, or any president, new, more usable nuclear weapons and new ways to use them. We should be taking reasonable steps to make nuclear war less likely and limiting a president's nuclear authority. Trump's plan brings us closer to nuclear war, and should be rejected.

Tom Z. Collina is director of policy at Ploughshares Fund, a global security foundation in Washington, D.C. He served as lead editor of the recent Ploughshares Fund report, "Ten Big Nuclear Ideas for the New President."

UN Security Council divided over nuclear ban treaty

January 19, 2018

UNSC divided on nuclear ban treaty

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20180119_24/

Members of the United Nations Security Council have taken a unified stance on North Korea's nuclear program, but remain divided over a treaty to ban nuclear weapons.

The members held a meeting on Thursday to discuss the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres attended, as did ministers from Russia and Britain.

US Ambassador Nikki Haley called North Korea one of the biggest threats to the world.

The members agreed that the North poses a serious threat to the nuclear non-proliferation framework.

But they were unable to find common ground on the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, adopted at the UN general assembly last year.

None of the countries with nuclear weapons have joined.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said it would be dangerous for these nations to give up their weapons without considering national interests and strategies.

The British state minister for Asia and the Pacific, Mark Field, criticized the treaty for providing no solution to the extremely complex security environment or nuclear disarmament issues.

Ambassadors of some of the signatory countries, including Peru and Cote d'Ivoire, said the treaty should be a global standard.

They also called on nuclear nations to create a security framework that doesn't rely on nuclear weapons.

Hibakusha in North Korea too

Hibakusha: A-bomb survivor dismayed by new victims of N. Korea nuclear tests

January 23, 2018 (Mainichi Japan)

<https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20180123/p2a/00m/0na/023000c>

HIROSHIMA -- In the waiting room of a dentist office here on Jan. 9, long-time advocate for Korean A-bomb survivors, Keisaburo Toyonaga, 81, who himself was exposed to residual radiation in the immediate aftermath of the Hiroshima bombing, had a heavy heart when he caught sight of the front page of the Mainichi Shimbun.

- **【Related】** Hibakusha: Survivor continues fight for recognition, support for Korean victims
- **【Related】** Hibakusha: Passing on a global baton of peace
- **【Hibakusha Series】**

"There are new nuclear bomb victims after all," he says, upon seeing the news of two North Korean defectors that fled the country after two underground nuclear tests near their home. They were found to have abnormalities in their chromosomes similar to those of Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombing victims, or "hibakusha." Toyonaga has long worried about hibakusha in North Korea, about whom very little is known.

"Look at this," said Toyonaga as he pulled out a publication by the Association of Citizens for Supporting South Korean Atomic Bomb Victims, of which he headed the Hiroshima branch until May 2016. In it, there is a letter sent to the Japanese government and other organizations via email in September 2016 by Pak

Mun Suk, one of the few North Koreans who acquired a health booklet that officially recognized her as a victim of the 1945 atomic bombings.

"The hibakusha in our country are receiving proper treatment for free from every level of medical institution under our excellent socialist medical system," Pak wrote, but she also requested the "provision of medicine and medical equipment required for treating radiation related diseases."

To Toyonaga, the letter oozes of the distress of North Korean hibakusha who cannot get the support they need from their country that continues to deepen its isolation with its nuclear and ballistic missile development programs. "Now more than ever, aren't private efforts needed, like Hiroshima doctors moving to help them?" he laments.

Still, Toyonaga received good news from South Korea last summer. In Hapcheon County, where roughly 600 of South Korea's some 2,500 hibakusha live, the world's third public peace memorial museum detailing the horrors of the bomb opened to join the facilities in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. There are not many exhibits, but as South Korea's hibakusha are also aging, the museum is considered important in order to pass along the experiences of the bomb to the next generation.

"I hope the Japanese and Korean museums can cooperate dynamically and it can become a place used to teach peace," says Toyonaga.

Toyonaga himself has been participating in the "Genbaku no e" (Drawings of the A-bombing) project since last summer, where A-bomb survivors tell their stories to students at Hiroshima Municipal Motomachi Senior High School, who then illustrate the experiences. Toyonaga was 9 years old when he entered Hiroshima in the immediate aftermath of the atomic bombing, and participated because he saw hope in the idea to have the hibakusha and young people create a work of art together. So far, he has met with two female students, and told them about witnessing people walking with the skin on their arms sagging off as well as other scenes. He said he felt strength bubbling up inside of him by seeing the earnest look in the girls' eyes.

While his legs have become weak, Toyonaga intends to continue to put all his efforts into telling his story in order to pass what he calls the "baton of peace" onto the next generation: "If it's to tell young people about the tragedy of the bomb, then there isn't anywhere I won't go."

Ex-sailor fights for nuke ban treaty

January 26, 2017

Hibakusha: Former navy sailor now fights for int'l nuke ban treaty

<https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20180126/p2a/00m/0na/016000c>

OSAKA -- Gripping his cane with a shaky right hand, Zenjiro Sakaguchi rose from his seat and gave a tight-lipped bow in greeting at a gathering here in December 2017 to collect signatures for nuclear weapons abolition.

- **【Related】** [Click here to read more Hibakusha Series articles](#)

The event was the inaugural assembly of the "Hibakusha Appeal" (A-bomb survivor's appeal) Osaka chapter, a group working to promote a larger international signature campaign calling for countries to join in the U.N. Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. Even as Sakaguchi, who is a representative facilitator for the chapter, received applause from the participants who filled the venue to capacity, his expression did not change.

"I've been thinking," the 96-year-old said. "This will be my final job."

Sakaguchi is a warrior for the causes he believes in. After World War II, he threw himself into working with the labor union of a private railway company in the Kansai region. He served a total of six terms as a Suita Municipal Assembly and Osaka Prefectural Assembly lawmaker before becoming the representative director of the Nihon Hidankyo, or Japan Confederation of A- and H-Bomb Sufferers Organizations, from fiscal 1985 to 2000, and again from fiscal 2005 to 2007. In that time, he faced off with the central government to get more aid for survivors.

"If you entrust it all to the people in charge (of the government), then we'll just have another war break out," Sakaguchi said, revealing the drive behind the efforts to which he has devoted his life.

On Aug. 6, 1945, four months had passed since the Imperial Japanese Navy destroyer Sakaguchi was on board had been sent to the bottom, and he had witnessed the battleship Yamato sink while he was afloat on the waves of the East China Sea. The 23-year-old communications officer was later assigned to a naval base in Kure, Hiroshima Prefecture, to prepare to meet a potential U.S. invasion of the Japanese home islands. He was just 20 kilometers south of central Hiroshima, and the bomb.

The fateful morning of Aug. 6, 1945, he saw a yellowish flash as he was inspecting communications equipment in a tent. Rushing outside, he could see an ominous cloud rise suddenly into the sky.

The following day, he entered the bombed area to help get Hiroshima Station back into service. Under the rubble lay countless bodies with charred skin and swollen faces. The men covered the air raid shelters in oil and set them aflame. As the black smoke rose into the sky, Sakaguchi muttered to himself, "The war must be brought to an end right away."

While setting up a communications post the next day, the unit was ordered to return to base. The second atomic bomb was dropped on Nagasaki and the war came to an end on Aug. 15, 1945.

Sakaguchi left the military, but became a warrior. When he heard the voices of his railway company co-workers dealing with a steep rise in prices, he went to the firm and requested higher pay. In an unsuccessful general strike, he lay down on the tracks and prevented the first train from leaving.

He also raised the anti-war flag. After the March 1954 Daigo Fukuryu Maru (Lucky Dragon 5) incident, where Japanese fishermen were irradiated by a U.S. thermonuclear bomb test on the Bikini Atoll, came to light, Sakaguchi stood outside Osaka Station to collect signatures opposing the nuclear tests. His distrust of those in power that had waged war was the driving force behind his activism.

The U.N. Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons was adopted in July 2017. However, nuclear powers and countries under the U.S.'s "nuclear umbrella" like Japan announced that they would not be signing it.

"If that's the way it is, then we will use our own power to make them join," said Sakaguchi. Unable to walk without his cane, it seems unlikely that Sakaguchi will take to the streets this time. Still, he is calling for signatures through acquaintances, and he distributes signature forms at every meeting venue he is invited to. Even in this final task, Sakaguchi's fighting spirit shows no signs of cooling down:

"We will get rid of nuclear weapons with our own signatures."

M. Abe, what is "realism" when we talk about nuclear weapons?

January 26, 2018

Abe urges realism on nuclear disarmament

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20180126_18/

Japan's Prime Minister says he wants to pursue a world free of nuclear weapons from a realistic standpoint, at a time when the imminence of the North Korean threat makes the US nuclear umbrella an absolute imperative.

Shinzo Abe's comments on Friday before the Upper House were in response to the leader of the ruling coalition partner, Komeito.

Natsuo Yamaguchi referred to the fact that Japan has not signed the legally-binding UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. He called the treaty a "landmark effort" to create an international standard.

Yamaguchi said Japan should play a leading role, as the only country to have suffered atomic bombings, in bridging the gap between nuclear powers and other nations.

Abe responded that North Korea's nuclear and missile development programs constitute a grave and imminent threat to Japan's peace and security. He said maintaining deterrence with both conventional and nuclear weapons under the Japan-US Alliance is essential to counter such a threat.

Abe added that Japan needs to maintain a realistic stance by dealing appropriately with real security threats, while at the same time leading efforts to achieve a world without nuclear weapons.

The prime minister criticized North Korea for pushing ahead with its nuclear and missile programs, but he also welcomed the recent resumption of inter-Korean talks.

He said the opening ceremony of the PyeongChang Olympics next month will be an opportunity for him to urge South Korean President Moon Jae-in to keep applying maximum pressure on Pyongyang.

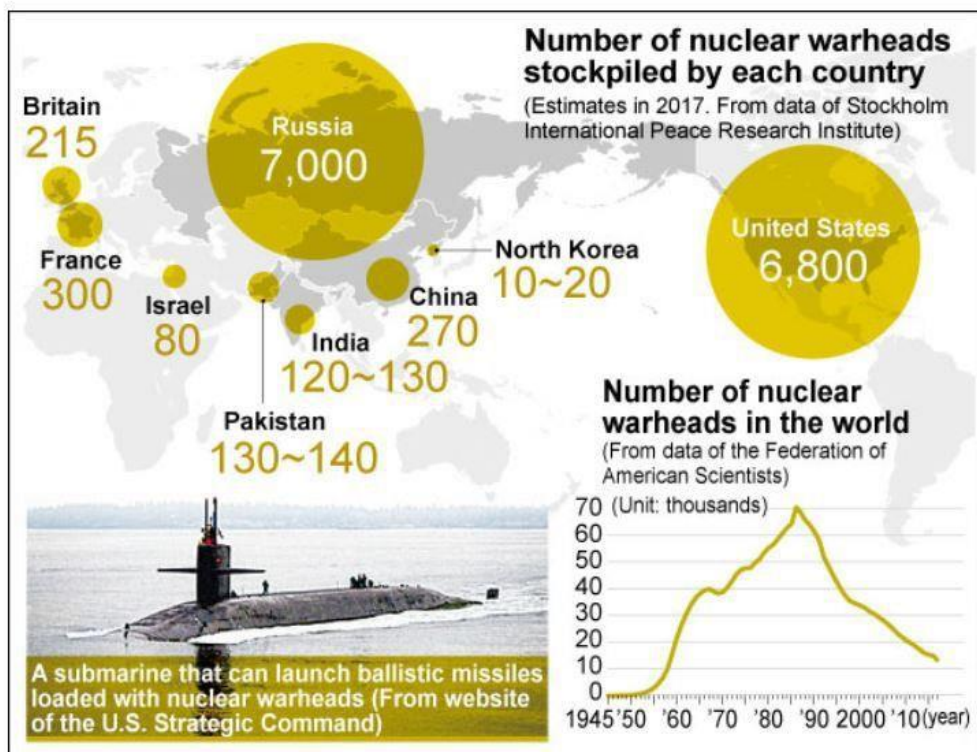
Abe added he wants to reaffirm the close cooperation between Tokyo, Seoul and Washington over the North Korean issue.

Abe backs US nuke policy

February 4, 2018

Tokyo 'highly appreciates,' backs Trump's U.S. nuke policy

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201802040021.html>



The Asahi Shimbun

The Japanese government said on Feb. 3 that it “highly appreciates” the Trump administration's new U.S. Nuclear Posture Review (NPR), which effectively abandons the ideal of realizing a nuclear-free world. Tokyo welcomed the 2018 NPR, released on Feb. 2, which expands the possibility of the use of nuclear weapons, because it emphasizes that the United States will strengthen its commitment to the security of its allies.

However, in cities devastated by atomic bombings in 1945, citizens expressed a backlash against the latest NPR.

“It is going against the wishes of not only the citizens in atomic bombed cities but also those on the Earth,” said Shigemitsu Tanaka, chairman of the Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Survivors Council. “Other countries that have nuclear weapons, including North Korea, will promote nuclear development further.”

The Japanese government’s stance again clearly showed its reliance on the U.S. nuclear umbrella and other weapons.

On Feb. 3, the Japanese government issued a statement under the name of Foreign Minister Taro Kono in response to the 2018 NPR, the first since the 2010 NPR under the Obama administration.

Mentioning the continued development of North Korea’s nuclear and missile programs, the statement said that the international security environment “has been rapidly worsened since the release of the previous 2010 NPR.”

The new NPR said that nuclear weapons play a role in offering a feeling of relief to U.S. allies and suggested that the United States will strengthen the role.

As for the point, the Japanese government appreciated it, saying in its statement, “(The latest NPR) clearly articulates the U.S. resolve to ensure the effectiveness of its deterrence and its commitment to providing extended deterrence to its allies, including Japan.”

In the NPR, the United States also expressed its commitment to continuing efforts toward the ultimate global elimination of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons, strengthening of the Nuclear Non-

Proliferation Treaty (NPT) regime, and pursuing security conditions that could enable further nuclear reductions.

Tokyo also noted the point and added in its statement, "Japan will continue to closely cooperate with the United States to promote realistic and tangible nuclear disarmament."

Japan's stance of calling for the eradication of nuclear weapons while relying on the U.S. nuclear umbrella seems a contradiction.

"The government has a responsibility to protect the people's peace and security in a realistic manner," Kono has told reporters. "Nuclear deterrence and nuclear disarmament are not contradictory."

In 2017, the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons was adopted at the United Nations. A nongovernmental organization, the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), which worked for its adoption, was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for its efforts.

Toshiyuki Mimaki, 75, a vice director of the Hiroshima prefectural council of A-bomb sufferers organizations, who visited Oslo in December for the Peace Prize awards ceremony, said, "I'm extremely angry."

Kunihiko Sakuma, 73, director of a different anti-nuclear group of the same name, criticized the Japanese government for its stance.

"The government is saying that it will serve as a bridge between countries that have nuclear weapons and countries that do not have them. But it is completely compliant to the United States. Japan will lose international trust," he said.

Russia, China critical of new US nuke policy

February 4, 2018 at 16:30 JST

Russia criticizes new US nuclear policy

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20180204_07/

Russia's foreign ministry has criticized the United States for trying to justify enhancing its nuclear capabilities as mainly to deter Russia.

A statement released on Saturday said Moscow was very disappointed and called the US move "confrontational" and "anti-Russia."

The statement said Russia can use nuclear weapons only when nuclear arsenals or weapons of mass destruction are used against the country and its allies.

It rebuffs the US claim that Russia mistakenly thinks it can settle conflicts with the threat of a nuclear first strike for its own benefit.

Russia said in light of the new US approach it will take measures needed to secure its own safety.

The United States issued the Nuclear Posture Review on Friday, which laid out a medium to long-term nuclear strategy.

The document says enhancing deterrence capabilities with low-yield nuclear arsenals is necessary. It says Russia and China are rapidly modernizing their nuclear capabilities.

February 4, 2018

China opposes new US nuclear strategy

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20180204_13/

China has voiced its firm opposition to the new US nuclear strategy that outlines plans to expand the country's nuclear capabilities.

Chinese defense ministry spokesperson Ren Guoqiang criticized the US Nuclear Posture Review in a statement released on Sunday.

The US government issued the medium to long-term nuclear strategy on Friday. The document says enhancing deterrence capabilities with low-yield nuclear arsenals is necessary. It says Russia and China are rapidly modernizing their nuclear capabilities.

The document also says China continues to increase the number, capabilities and protection of its nuclear forces.

But in Sunday's statement, Ren accused the United States of "presumptuous speculation" about China's intentions. He said the US is playing up the threat of its nuclear strength.

Ren said China has always adopted a restrained attitude toward the development of nuclear weapons and has kept its nuclear forces to the minimum level required for national security.

He noted that the US owns the world's largest nuclear arsenal. He said China hopes that the US will discard its "cold-war mentality" and shoulder its own special and primary responsibility for nuclear disarmament.

The spokesman added that his country also wants the US to take a fair view of China's national defense and military development.

Just a little bit of nuke deterrence?

February 5, 2017

VOX POPULI: Just a little bit of nuclear annihilation is a mad idea

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201802050040.html>

Making smaller nuclear weapons to create a greater deterrence is a preposterous idea.

Tatsuichiro Akizuki, a doctor who survived the atomic bombing of Nagasaki, has just penned his thoughts after watching the initial screening of a documentary depicting the nuclear destruction of that city and Hiroshima in 1945.

The film shows a desolate landscape with heaps of charred roof tiles lying amid the ruined city.

But some viewers have complained that scenes showing humans are scarce.

"You can't describe the atomic-bombed Nagasaki or Hiroshima without human victims," one said.

Later, scenes of survivors receiving medical treatment were added, but Akizuki was not happy with the result. There were images of patients with burns covering their entire bodies and also people with horrific wounds.

In the aftermath of the atomic bombing, however, "the earth and rivers were filled with throngs of such people," Akizuki wrote.

There were certain aspects of the devastation that could not be described in the film.

More than 70 years since the atomic bombs were dropped on the cities, there are still huge arsenals of nuclear weapons in the world and something called a "nuclear strategy" is being developed. The U.S. administration of President Donald Trump recently unveiled nuclear policy guidelines for the next five to 10 years.

The new U.S. nuclear strategy calls for developing smaller nuclear weapons in that their use will be more acceptable. The idea being that if they are "easier to use" it enhances the U.S. nuclear deterrent.

Some news reports have said these smaller nukes would have a quarter of the destructive power of the bomb that devastated Nagasaki.

The military logic of considering such nuclear arms as "easier to use" is simply shocking.

Former U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell once rejected this kind of thinking.

"No sane leader would ever want to cross that line to using nuclear weapons," Powell said in an interview with The Asahi Shimbun about five years ago. "And, if you are not going to cross that line, then these things are basically useless."

The vision of a world without nuclear weapons was an extension of his line of reasoning.

The current U.S. administration has taken its thinking in the opposite direction and argued that if nuclear weapons are hard to use they should be made easier to use.

The administration claims the new nuclear policy is a strategic response to nuclear threats from Russia and other nations that have indicated their willingness to use nuclear arms.

Does the Trump administration intend to start a nuclear game of chicken in which players more willing to push the nuclear button win?

Is there any room for humans in this view?

What is "credible" as far as nukes are concerned?

February 5, 2018

Editorial: New Trump nuclear policy risks dragging humanity down road to darkness

<https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20180205/p2a/00m/0na/017000c>

There are but two minutes left in the last day of our civilization. This is according to the Doomsday Clock update released in late January by the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, a U.S. academic journal. It was advanced by 30 seconds from last year. The Doomsday Clock is a representation of "how close we are to destroying our civilization with dangerous technologies of our own making," including nuclear weapons.

- **【Related】** A-bomb survivors dismayed at Trump's new nuke policy
- **【Related】** Japan welcomes Trump's nuclear-reliant policy
- **【Related】** US not ruling out use of nukes in response to non-nuclear attacks

Not since 1953, when it looked like the Cold War would boil hot with the United States and the Soviet Union competing in nuclear tests, has the minute hand on the Doomsday Clock been so close to midnight. In other words, we are in dark days -- a pall cast in great part by the rush to the potentially nuclear confrontation between the U.S. administration of President Donald Trump and North Korea led by Kim Jong Un. However, the recent release of the U.S.' Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) may have the minute hand ticking the closest it has ever been to midnight in human history.

The NPR executive summary states, "While the United States has continued to reduce the number and salience of nuclear weapons, others, including Russia and China, have ... added new types of nuclear capabilities to their arsenals, increased the salience of nuclear forces in their strategies and plans, and engaged in increasingly aggressive behavior." The full report also points out that "North Korea's continued pursuit of nuclear weapons capabilities poses the most immediate and dire proliferation threat to international security and stability."

The Trump administration claims in the executive summary that "expanding flexible U.S. nuclear options now, to include low-yield options, is important for the preservation of credible deterrence against regional aggression."

The previous NPR was conducted under former President Barack Obama in 2010. The global security environment has indeed changed a great deal in the ensuing eight years, so Trump did have cause to order a fresh review. The problem is the combination of the Trump administration's worldview and its thinking on nuclear weapons.

The 2010 NPR states that "the United States wishes to stress that it would only consider the use of nuclear weapons in extreme circumstances to defend the vital interests of the United States or its allies and partners," and the 2018 version sticks to that principle. However, the new NPR specifically dissects the capabilities of Russia, China, Iran and North Korea, and leaves the distinct impression that Washington has specific circumstances in mind for when the U.S. would resort to nuclear arms. **It also states that the U.S. could respond to even non-nuclear attacks with nuclear counterstrikes.**

This lowers the psychological bar for using nuclear weapons, and makes the risk of nuclear attacks feel more realistic. A senior Department of Defense official emphasized that the NPR's content did not mean that the U.S. had any wish to use atomic arms, but America's antagonists probably aren't thinking that way.

Furthermore, deploying smaller warheads actually increases the danger of nuclear war. The Obama administration scrapped the U.S.' nuclear-tipped sea-launched cruise missiles (SLCMs) to avoid any possibility that a country targeted with conventional cruise missiles would mistake them (genuinely or deliberately) for the atomic variety and order a nuclear counterattack.

The Trump administration is looking to return nuclear-armed SLCMs to the U.S. arsenal -- a move that appears designed to consign Obama's global denuclearization policy to the dustbin of history in both name and reality.

This is an extremely dangerous choice. In his State of the Union address, Trump declared that "we know that weakness is the surest path to conflict, and unmatched power is the surest means to our true and great defense." He added, "As part of our defense, we must modernize and rebuild our nuclear arsenal, hopefully never having to use it, but making it so strong and so powerful that it will deter any acts of aggression by any other nation or anyone else."

However, for the world's greatest military power to expand its arsenal yet further will almost certainly trigger a backlash and military expansion in not just Russia and China, but also in places like Iran and North Korea. Rather than take that risk, it would be far safer and far more sensible to promote global disarmament including China and Russia.

Furthermore, the Trump administration's nuclear stance runs counter to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) which, though it recognizes the U.S., Russia, France, Britain and China as legal nuclear powers, also demands those nations hold substantive disarmament talks. Trump's nuclear arms policy has none of the spirit of this agreement, and risks spurring the hollowing out of the NPT.

The 2018 NPR is the fourth such review since President Bill Clinton's time in office. The Republican administration of President George W. Bush had leaned toward the U.S. being able to use its nuclear arms, but in its NPR released in 2002, which came just a year after the 9.11 terror attacks, it put heavy emphasis on the nuclear option as a terror countermeasure and made a clean break from Washington's traditionally hostile policy toward the former Soviet Union and Russia. With its vehement insistence on viewing Russia as hostile, however, the Trump administration is risking starting a new Cold War.

The U.S. administration's moves have also made Japan's position uncertain. Last year, non-nuclear states angry with the nuclear powers' apparent disinterest in serious disarmament signed the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons at the United Nations. Japan, though the only country in the world to suffer a nuclear attack, came under severe pressure from its ally the U.S. and did not even join the negotiations.

Should the U.S. lean toward expanding its nuclear arsenal, the reduction and eventually elimination of atomic arms demanded by the NPT will recede even further into the misty distance. The nations protected by the U.S. nuclear umbrella -- including Japan -- are opposed to the ban treaty. However, none of these countries would welcome a renewed nuclear arms race among the Great Powers.

Japan's Foreign Minister Taro Kono praised the Trump administration's NPR for clearly spelling out the U.S. commitment to using its nuclear deterrent to protect its allies. The Japanese government is also likely well pleased by the NPR's declaration that "the United States reaffirms that North Korea's illicit nuclear program must be completely, verifiably, and irreversibly eliminated."

That being said, North Korea is a military minnow without its nuclear bombs, so surely the U.S. can respond to the Pyongyang threat without reorienting its nuclear strategy. Rather, increased U.S. rivalry with China and Russia caused by the policies spelled out in Washington's latest NPR could in fact prove a major obstacle to multilateral efforts to deal with the North Korean problem. The Trump administration should open its eyes to this fact.

US nuke strategy drowns world's hopes

February 5, 2018

EDITORIAL: New U.S. nuke strategy a blow to progress made to denuclearize

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201802050028.html>

The new U.S. nuclear strategy unveiled on Feb. 2 by the administration of President Donald Trump has splashed cold water on the world's hopes for a future without nuclear weapons.

The strategy pushes back the progress that has been made in nuclear disarmament and could pose a new, serious threat to the safety of the world.

The 2018 Nuclear Posture Review by the Trump administration is a report that lays down guiding principles for U.S. nuclear policy for the next five to 10 years.

The new nuclear policy sharply veers from the course set by the previous administration of President Barack Obama in the 2010 Nuclear Posture Review.

The new strategy has effectively scrapped the Obama administration's commitment to reduce the role and the number of nuclear arms.

On the contrary, the Trump administration has made clear its intention to expand the roles and capabilities of America's nuclear arsenal.

The report stresses the security threats posed by Russia, China and North Korea and argues that "global threat conditions have worsened markedly" since the last Nuclear Posture Review in 2010.

But the notion that national security can be maintained only by overwhelming nuclear firepower is hopelessly anachronistic.

The Cold War era, when the United States and the Soviet Union were locked in a dangerous and futile arms race, is already history.

The threat of nuclear arms has become far more complex and diversified and now include those related to international terrorist groups and cyberattacks.

If it keeps maintaining a massive stockpile of ready-to-use nuclear weapons, the United States will contribute to increasing the risks of accidental nuclear war due to human error and theft of nuclear material, exposing the entire world to the danger.

That is why a nonpartisan group of four elder U.S. statesmen, including former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and former Defense Secretary William Perry, wrote a newspaper opinion piece in 2007 proposing steps toward a world free of nuclear weapons. Their call led to Obama's efforts to reduce the size and scope of the U.S. arsenal.

The Trump administration should learn from the long history of debate on the issue.

What is particularly worrisome about the report is the administration's plans to develop "low-yield" nuclear warheads to be mounted on submarine-launched ballistic missiles and cruise missiles.

Thinking that building up smaller nuclear weapons that are easier to use would be more effective in deterring attacks by enemies seems to signal a lack of good sense.

If the border between nuclear and conventional weapons blurs, the likelihood of accidental nuclear war would rise.

The new policy also warns that the United States could use nuclear weapons in response to non-nuclear attacks. Potential scenarios of such nuclear responses apparently include large-scale cyberwarfare. But this thought indicates a dangerous willingness to choose nuclear options.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which the United States has signed, requires nuclear powers to pursue nuclear disarmament.

As a leading nuclear power, the United States should bear an especially heavy responsibility.

By also applying its America First principle to nuclear strategy, the Trump administration is acting in an irresponsible way that could deliver a heavy blow to the international regime to prevent nuclear proliferation.

In his State of the Union address to Congress last month, Trump said, sarcastically, “Perhaps someday in the future there will be a magical moment when the countries of the world will get together to eliminate their nuclear weapons.”

Trump’s apparent inability to imagine the terrifying destruction nuclear arms could wreak and his desire to secure America’s military superiority over others constitute the largest concern for the future of the world.

Russia questions Us new nuke policy



February 6, 2018

Russia questions US compliance with key nuke accord

https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20180206/p2g/00m/0in/013000c#cxrecs_s

MOSCOW (AP) -- Russia challenged U.S. compliance with a key nuclear arms control treaty on Monday and warned that the Trump administration's new nuclear strategy lowers the threshold for using atomic weapons.

The dire assessment came as Moscow said it has met its own requirements under the New START agreement that was signed in 2010 and entered into force a year later. It restricts both the U.S. and Russia

to 1,550 deployed strategic nuclear warheads on a maximum of 700 deployed intercontinental ballistic missiles and strategic bombers. The deadline to verify both countries' compliance was Monday. The Russian Foreign Ministry said it now has 527 deployed intercontinental ballistic missiles and strategic bombers. It gave a tally of 1,444 strategic nuclear warheads. The U.S. reported it has been in compliance with the limits since August.

Russia acknowledged the U.S. position on meeting the targets, but voiced concern about the U.S. reconfiguring some submarines and bombers to carry conventional weapons. The Foreign Ministry said it doesn't have a way to confirm the reconfigured hardware was rendered incapable of carrying nuclear weapons.

Washington also "arbitrarily converted" some underground missile launch sites into training facilities, which wasn't spelled out in the treaty, the ministry said. It urged the U.S. work with Russia to resolve such matters.

The U.S. State Department insisted America was fully adhering to the deal.

"To meet the central limits of the treaty, the United States developed and utilized conversion procedures in full compliance with its treaty obligations," it said, adding it would cooperate with Russia to "address technical questions and issues related to the ongoing implementation of New START."

Russia-U.S. ties have been miserable for several years, but nuclear weapons reduction has been a strong point. The former Cold War foes have clashed most notably over Russia's conduct in Ukraine, the Syrian civil war and allegations Moscow meddled in the 2016 U.S. presidential election. The Trump administration's pivot to a new nuclear strategy could now affect arms control cooperation.

Last week, the Trump administration announced it would continue much of President Barack Obama's nuclear policy, while adopting a more aggressive stance toward Russia. Russia must be convinced it would face "unacceptably dire costs" for threatening even a limited nuclear attack in Europe, the new policy states.

The Pentagon-led review made clear the administration's view that Russian policies and actions are fraught with potential for miscalculation that could lead to an uncontrolled escalation of conflict in Europe.

It specifically pointed to a Russian doctrine known as "escalate to de-escalate," in which Moscow would use or threaten to use smaller-yield nuclear weapons in a limited, conventional conflict in Europe to compel the U.S. and NATO to back down. Consequently, the review said the U.S. would modify "a small number" of existing long-range ballistic missiles carried by Trident strategic submarines to fit them with smaller-yield nuclear warheads.

Russia slammed the U.S. report, saying it was founded on false assumptions about Moscow's intentions and contained worrying modernization plans.

The U.S. Nuclear Posture Review puts "in question our right to defend ourselves against an aggression that threatens the country's survival," the Foreign Ministry said in a weekend statement. "We would like to hope that Washington is aware of the high level of danger when such doctrinal provisions move to the level of practical military planning."

The ministry said Russia's military doctrine envisages the use of nuclear weapons to deter an aggression that threatens "the very existence of our state." It said Washington, however, took a no-limits approach that could mean using nuclear weapons in "extreme circumstances" beyond defense against military operations.

"Even military scenarios are presented so ambiguously that it seems like the U.S. planners may view practically any use of military capability as a reason for delivering a nuclear strike against anyone they consider an 'aggressor,'" the ministry said.

It said U.S. plans to develop new low-yield nuclear weapons "will greatly increase the temptation of using them, especially considering the right to a disarming first strike as set out in the new U.S. doctrine."

"Assurances that the implementation of these plans will not lower the nuclear threshold can at least be interpreted as a desire to delude the international community," the ministry said.

"It is even more frightening that the U.S. military and other national security professionals firmly believe in their ability to model conflict scenarios that involve low-yield nuclear options. Quite to the contrary, we believe that this dramatic lowering of the threshold conditions can provoke a nuclear missile war even in a low-intensity conflict."

"Japan has sold its soul"

February 7, 2018

EDITORIAL: By backing Trump nuclear policy, Japan has sold its soul

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201802070031.html>

Even though Japan is the only nation to have experienced the horror of atomic bombing, it blindly followed the Trump administration's tough new nuclear policy.

This reveals a complete lack of interest in efforts to achieve a nuclear-free world.

In a statement, Foreign Minister Taro Kono said Japan "highly appreciates" Trump's sweeping Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) to allow the United States to flex its nuclear muscle in the name of nuclear deterrence.

This new policy promotes the use of smaller nukes that would be easier to use, possibly even against non-nuclear attacks.

"Nuclear deterrence and nuclear disarmament are not mutually exclusive," Kono said.

By its very nature, the NPR runs counter to the current of nuclear disarmament.

What will happen if, by lowering the bar on the use of nuclear weapons, a nuclear war erupts for an unforeseeable reason?

A study commissioned by the Foreign Ministry four years ago estimated that in a modern city of around 1 million souls, about 270,000 people would die if a Hiroshima class weapon detonated. A hydrogen bomb would take approximately 830,000 lives.

Japan understands all too well that nuclear weapons are inhumane, and it has a duty to lead the world in nuclear disarmament. Yet, this government thinks of nuclear issues only within the narrow framework of the Japan-U.S. alliance.

The U.S. NPR coldly dismisses the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, passed by the United Nations last year, as "completely unrealistic." In going along with this policy, has Kono lost all interest in seeking common ground with international public opinion that supports this treaty?

In East Asia's security environment, it is a fact that Japan is protected by the U.S. nuclear umbrella. But German Foreign Minister Sigmar Gabriel, whose nation shares the same protection, criticized the NPR to the effect that an escalation of the nuclear arms race will jeopardize Europe.

He argued that is precisely why Europe must move toward a new arms management and disarmament system.

Feb. 5 was the deadline set for the so-called New START Treaty, signed by the Obama administration and Russia, to meet the treaty's central limits on strategic arms. Both the United States and Russia announced their successful attainment of the target.

The world is now at a crucial crossroads. Will it proceed with nuclear arms expansion and proliferation, or with nuclear disarmament and abolition?

In spring 2016, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and President Barack Obama stood side-by-side in Hiroshima and expressed their joint resolve to realize a world without nuclear weapons. If Abe thinks he can scrap this resolve because the U.S. administration has changed, he is shamelessly irresponsible.

For years, the Japanese government was in the habit of presenting an annual nuclear abolition resolution to the United Nations, acting as a "bridge" between the world's nuclear and non-nuclear powers.

Japan must remind itself of this responsibility now.

Precisely because America is an ally, Japan must put a brake on the Trump administration's escalation of nuclear might and strive to explore an objective resolution to the North Korean problem.

The government also needs to work together with hibakusha organizations and hone its diplomatic skills to better communicate its resolve to rid the world of nuclear weapons.

Japan ought to be doing all these things right now.

Nuclear threshold

February 8, 2018

A new world, a new Nuclear Posture Review

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2018/02/08/editorials/new-world-new-npr/#.Wn2PIHwiGos>

The U.S. government last week released the Nuclear Posture Review, a congressionally mandated report that explains its thinking about nuclear weapons and nuclear policy. The NPR reflects the Trump administration's belief that the world is increasingly shaped by great power competition and that nuclear arms are needed to promote security and stability. The world is more dangerous than it has been for a long time, but there are justifiable concerns that this new approach could magnify dangers, not reduce them.

Every NPR has three goals: to deter adversaries, to reassure allies and to create conditions that promote disarmament. Arguing that the world has changed significantly since the last NPR was written in 2010, the latest report is oriented more toward deterrence, while retaining a commitment to nonproliferation and arms control. The authors of the NPR devote considerable space to the reassurance of allies, and it focuses on strengthening extended deterrence. It supports ongoing, close collaboration with allies and partners to ensure that strategies are tailored to their specific situation.

The new document acknowledges the long-standing U.S. goal to reduce the numbers of nuclear weapons — its stockpile of nuclear weapons has been cut by more than 85 percent since the Cold War peak — but seems to reverse the effort of previous administrations to reduce the salience of nuclear weapons in U.S. defense policy. That change is based on the belief that other countries have been modernizing arsenals and doctrines, and as a result have acquired weapons systems that can be deployed in crises. The United States must prevent them from believing that nuclear weapons will allow them to prevail in those situations. To that end, the NPR calls for the creation of two new capabilities: a low-yield warhead for

submarine-launched ballistic missiles and a nuclear-capable submarine-launched cruise missile. Low-yield nuclear weapons have long been part of the U.S. arsenal; nuclear-tipped cruise missiles were once deployed by the U.S. but they were shelved years ago, a move that troubled some Japanese strategists. Critics charge that the approach of U.S. President Donald Trump's administration will increase the likelihood of nuclear war. First, they argue that deploying lower-yield weapons will lower the nuclear threshold: Governments will be encouraged to use them in a conflict since they will not threaten a strategic exchange. Advocates counter that precisely because lower-level nuclear options exist — without them, a country can only respond with its strategic arsenal — adversaries will not be tempted to go nuclear to terminate a conflict, or “escalate to de-escalate.”

Second, critics point out that adversaries will not know what warhead is on a submarine-launched missile. The platform and the missile are used for both conventional and low-yield nuclear weapons. A wary adversary will not wait to find out which it is and will deploy its nuclear forces before they are destroyed. The temptation to “use it or lose it” is strong.

Third, there is the charge that the new NPR allows the U.S. to use its nuclear weapons in response to non-nuclear attacks. This policy is not new. Washington has long maintained that its nuclear weapons could be used to respond to any attack with weapons of mass destruction, including biological or chemical weapons. The new twist is their possible use for a cyberattack on critical infrastructure. It is long-standing policy that the U.S. would consider the use of nuclear weapons in extreme circumstances to defend the vital interests of the U.S., its allies and partners. A U.S. official noted that “the NPR clarifies long-standing policy that extreme circumstances could include significant nonnuclear strategic attacks,” adding that the “clarification is stabilizing. It lowers the risk of nuclear use by anyone.” He emphasized that the context of an attack is important.

There is a fourth way in which the new NPR could increase the risk of nuclear use. Modernization of the nuclear arsenal will cost a lot of money; by one estimate, it will consume 3.7 percent of the Defense Department budget at its peak in 2029. Given straitened fiscal conditions, that money will have to come from other defense accounts, most likely conventional forces. Reducing conventional capabilities in turn increases the likelihood of resorting to nuclear weapons in a crisis.

The Japanese government, like many U.S. allies, is pleased with the new NPR. The emphasis on extended deterrence, reassurance and tailored deterrence is welcome. The new document does not refer to “strategic stability,” a phrase in President Barack Obama's NPR that suggested that China would have a second-strike capability. As a result, Beijing could threaten the U.S. homeland if Washington honored its commitment to defend Japan. That was anything but reassuring. That change is welcome. The prospect of early nuclear weapons use in a crisis is not.

IAEA wants to get in N.Korea again

February 16, 2018

Japan, IAEA to cooperate on N.Korea

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20180216_10/

Japan's Foreign Minister and the chief of the International Atomic Energy Agency have agreed to work together to persuade North Korea to accept IAEA inspections.

Taro Kono met with IAEA Director General Yukiya Amano in Vienna, Austria, on Thursday.

Amano described North Korea as a threat to the world. He said the IAEA is ready to dispatch inspectors to the North again if the situation allows.

Kono replied Japan is willing to support the IAEA to prepare for the North's possible dismantling of its nuclear program due to pressure through sanctions.

The IAEA halted inspections in the North in 2009 when its inspectors were forced to leave the country.

Kono and Amano also confirmed the agreement between the 2 sides to enhance measures against terrorism in the run-up to the 2020 Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics.

Before the meeting, Kono met with the secretary general of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Thomas Greminger.

They agreed that they cannot tolerate the North's nuclear program and that the international community needs to cooperate to maximize pressure on the country.

The arms race: Blurring the boundary between nuclear and non-nuclear



February 22, 2018

Perils of trivializing nuclear weapons

by Andres Ortega

The Globalist

MADRID – In case you haven't noticed, the nuclear arms issue is back — in its strategic rather than its tactical or battlefield dimension.

That's true not only in North Korea, but in Russia as well. It has deployed Iskander missiles (known as the SS-26 in NATO-speak) in the enclave (some call it an exclave) of Kaliningrad, the capital of which is the former Koenigsberg of Immanuel Kant.

These missiles are capable of carrying nuclear payloads (whether they do in fact carry them is unknown). Russia made its move in response to the deployment of 4,500 allied troops in Poland and the Baltic states. If the Kaliningrad-based Iskander missiles are armed with nuclear warheads, Russia would be in breach of the 1986 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty agreed by U.S. President Ronald Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev. This is dangerous.

For its part, the Trump administration has published a new nuclear doctrine in its latest Nuclear Posture Review to renew its arsenal. The U.S. move is especially intended to allow for lighter payloads (although greater than at Hiroshima). The underlying idea is that this could make them "more usable," or at least more "thinkable." Hitting the nail on the head as usual, Harvard University's Stephen Walt argues that the Pentagon is answering "questions that nobody should be asking."

The modernization of the U.S. nuclear arsenal essentially comes in response not to North Korea, but to Russia and China's modernization of their nuclear weapons. It notably did not start with President Donald Trump, but with his predecessor Barack Obama. Obama's move was all the more telling as his prematurely being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize included being heralded for being the first U.S. president to advocate a "world without nuclear weapons."

But at the end of his two terms in office, as I noted at the time, Obama launched a program to overhaul the arsenal, admittedly bringing down total numbers. The notion of favoring less potent nuclear arms also dates back a long way.

The current U.S. defense secretary, Jim Mattis, goes much further in his new doctrine. Contrary to the Obama administration, which had scrapped them, he advocates the reintroduction of updated sea-launched cruise missiles loaded with nuclear warheads.

"Mad Dog" Mattis proposes respecting the terms of the 2010 New START Treaty, although it has not yet been ratified. That treaty was the last major arms control agreement between Russia and the United States prior to the cooling of relations that followed the annexation of Crimea and the war in Ukraine. New START, also known as START III, limits both sides to 1,500 nuclear warheads. This is far fewer than in the Cold War but enough to destroy the world many times over.

However, it remains to be seen whether the two powers will be capable of reaching a new agreement when the current one expires in 2021. They are not working on it. The U.S. continues to respect the treaty that bans nuclear testing, although it too has never been ratified.

The new nuclear strategy involves a modernization of the arsenal. According to its authors, the doctrine simply "clarifies" the situation. "Our goal is to convince adversaries that they have nothing to gain and everything to lose from the use of nuclear weapons," Mattis declared at the presentation of the review. But it may signal a major change, because it also means that such adversaries "must understand that there are no possible benefits from non-nuclear aggression or limited nuclear escalation."

Above all, the new U.S. nuclear doctrine calls for the development of smaller weapons and a “flexible, tailored” strategy of nuclear deterrence to have all possible options available in an escalation. In “extreme circumstances” that may lead to the use of these weapons to defend the vital interests of the U.S., its allies or its partners, even in the face of “significant non-nuclear strategic attacks.”

In other words, it broadens the scenarios in which the U.S. may use nuclear arms, including that of nuclear against non-nuclear (which was, lest it be forgotten, at the root of the Cold War in Europe).

The document advocates strengthening “the integration of nuclear and non-nuclear military planning.”

There is a danger of trivializing these weapons — especially when, as the review itself says, there is “an unprecedented range and mix of threats, including major conventional, chemical, biological, nuclear, space and cyber threats, and violent nonstate actors.”

Deterrence continues to be the rule, albeit in a very different guise. It is no longer a matter of two sides, but rather three or more, including nonstate actors. While nuclear weapons would not deter terrorists of the Islamic State variety or others, the fear of nuclear terrorism of some sort is ever present.

The fact is that the boundary between the nuclear and the non-nuclear is blurred by this doctrine. It is also being blurred in another way: With the building of the increasingly powerful conventional bombs being developed by the U.S. (as well as Russia and China), such as the so-called hypersonic weapons.

The U.S. used what it dubbed the “mother of all bombs,” its largest conventional weapon, launched from an airplane, the GBU-43/B Massive Ordnance Air Blast (MOAB), in Afghanistan last April against a network of Islamic State tunnels in the province of Nangarhar.

In other words, nuclear weapons are downsizing while their conventional counterparts become ever more powerful.

“Let it be an arms race!” Trump proclaimed during his election campaign. There is just such a race, again, in the nuclear domain, without even counting the new proliferators such as North Korea.

Nuclear weapons cannot be uninvented, but they can be reinvented. And it seems that this is what we face: Not the prospect of a quantitative race this time, but rather a qualitative race, one that corrodes the boundaries between the nuclear and the non-nuclear.

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Storage of nuclear weapons in Okinawa ?

March 6, 2018

Japanese official allegedly did not rule out building nuclear weapons storage site in Okinawa

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2018/03/06/national/politics-diplomacy/japanese-official-allegedly-not-rule-building-nuclear-weapons-storage-site-okinawa/#.Wp6FonwiGos>

Kyodo

WASHINGTON – Vice Foreign Minister Takeo Akiba did not rule out the possibility of a nuclear weapons storage site being built in Okinawa Prefecture in comments he allegedly made in 2009 when he was a minister at the Japanese Embassy in Washington, a U.S. researcher said Monday.

Gregory Kulacki, China project manager at the U.S.-based Union of Concerned Scientists, cited a document he obtained dated Feb. 27, 2009, that summarized Akiba's remarks at a U.S. congressional commission that year.

In response to a question on how Japan might view the construction of a nuclear weapons storage site in Okinawa or Guam, Akiba "stated that he found such a proposal persuasive," according to the document.

In Tokyo, however, Foreign Minister Taro Kono denied that Akiba had made such a remark.

"The government has firmly maintained the three nonnuclear principles" of not possessing, not producing and not allowing the introduction of nuclear weapons into Japan, Kono said.

The not-so-Lucky Dragon



February 28, 2018

How the unlucky Lucky Dragon birthed an era of nuclear fear

<https://thebulletin.org/how-unlucky-lucky-dragon-birthered-era-nuclear-fear11546>

David Ropeik

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Yumenoshima Park on a drizzly November day is a dreary place. It sits on an artificial island made of waste and landfill along one of the drainage canals that empty into Tokyo Bay, in Koto, a neighborhood in the Japanese capital that doesn't show up on any must-visit lists. Hundreds of thousands of people visit the famous Tsukiji fish market, a couple miles to the west, every year. Millions visit Tokyo Disney, a couple miles the other way. But few visit the Daigo Fukuryū Maru Exhibition Hall, a small A-frame building tucked in a corner of the park. More might, if they understood the significance of the weathered 94-foot long fishing boat on display inside.

The Lucky Dragon No. 5 looks odd sitting indoors, resting on the concrete floor supported by red metal posts under dim lighting. A ladder on the starboard side lets you climb up and peer at her deck and wheelhouse. Peer, and ponder what it must have been like on the morning in 1954 when the vessel bobbed in the Pacific Ocean near the Marshall Islands, and the sky in the west burst into eerie orange, like a bright sudden dawn, followed by a roar and a violent rush of waves. Ponder what the 23 crew members

thought when a ghostly white rain, thick with ash, started to fall, coating them and their catch. Ponder how profoundly the strange and frightening events that morning shaped so much of the world we now live in.

Just before dawn on March 1, 1954, most of the crew of the Daigo Fukuryu Maru were below deck asleep, having worked overnight at the grinding labor of long-line tuna fishing. Yoshio Masaki, the ship's fishing master, was on deck, and later recorded in his log the frightening things he saw and heard: "Suddenly the boat has been surrounded by a bright light. Such an early dawn is impossible. Makes feel something very dangerous." Another crewman wrote "Oh. What is that!? Shocked! Suddenly all over the west direction, as if having been inflamed, became deep and bright like sunrise. Terrible!" Masaki wrote, "nine minutes later a roaring sound arrives like overlapping avalanches. Bang, bang, bang, bang—an awful sound like the Marshall Islands are sinking as angry waves into the sea."

The crew raced to the deck. Someone yelled "atomic bomb!" Fear raced through men who just a few years previously had been combatants in World War II, men who knew about Hiroshima and Nagasaki. They searched for the mushroom-shaped cloud they had seen in pictures of those bombings. They scanned the sky for planes and the horizon for ships.

But what they had witnessed was far more than a Hiroshima-style atomic bomb. The glow and shock wave came from the test detonation of a thermonuclear weapon, a new version of mankind's most powerful tool of war. The test was code-named Castle Bravo, and it had gone frighteningly wrong. The bomb turned out to be more than twice as powerful as its designers predicted, and while the Lucky Dragon was 86 miles from the test site and outside the officially declared warning zone, it was well within the range of the bomb's impact.

The crew returned to work hauling in their catch, but as they watched, strangely layered circles of clouds slowly spread from the direction of the explosion. Then it started to rain. Pelting *white* rain, driven by suddenly howling winds that the US meteorologists assigned to the bomb test had predicted would blow the other way. The unnatural rain coated the ship and crew with a gritty ash that stuck to the men's hands, necks, faces, and hair and got in their mouths and eyes. It painted the dark blue tuna on the deck a ghostly grey.

The rain and ash fell on the Lucky Dragon for five hours. By the time it subsided, some of the crew were dizzy, vomiting, or had fevers. They had been covered in, swallowed, and inhaled the highly radioactive remains of corals incinerated by the immense nuclear explosion, the powdery remnants of which had been thrown into the sky and then rained back down across a vast area of ocean. By the time they got back to port two weeks later, most of the crew were suffering from headaches, bleeding gums, skin burns, and hair falling out in clumps. All the men were hospitalized.

Operation Ivy. The Japanese media devoted extensive coverage to the plight of the Lucky Dragon. The *Yomiuri Shimbun* reported "Japanese fishermen encounter Bikini A-bomb explosion test. 23 men suffer from A-bomb disease." Within days the international press was covering it too.

Though the world already knew that high levels of radiation had caused what was then known as "atomic bomb disease" among survivors of the weapons dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, *that* illness was associated with the radiation generated at the moment the bombs exploded. Japanese medical investigators found that in *this* case, the men of the Lucky Dragon No. 5 were suffering from something else, an illness experts labeled "acute radiation disease" that was caused not by the bomb but the radioactive rain it produced. The Japanese began calling this rain *shi no hai*, death ash. The media, and the world, quickly began calling it by a new name that within weeks joined the global lexicon of fear: *fallout*. Japan, which for years had honored but also stigmatized and avoided the *hibakusha*, citizens from Hiroshima and Nagasaki who survived the atomic bombs, now poured out sympathy for the Lucky Dragon

crew and outrage at the United States for once again victimizing Japan with atomic weapons. “We are not guinea pigs!” wrote one newspaper.

Just days after the Lucky Dragon returned to port, a Japanese town passed a resolution against the use of atomic bombs. That action was widely reported and within weeks such resolutions were adopted across Japan, and within a few months, around the world. The first “World Conference Against A and H bombs” was held the following summer, in Hiroshima. This was fully nine years after such bombs had been used. It wasn’t the World War II bombings but the Lucky Dragon No. 5 that finally triggered the world-wide call to ban the bomb, the first truly global protest movement of the modern era.

The Daigo Fukuryu Maru also peeled away the cloak of secrecy surrounding the US nuclear weapons testing that had been going on in the Pacific for eight years. The US military had made an hour-long film, *Operation Ivy*, focused on the 1952 test of a nuclear bomb nicknamed “Mike.” The film was made for internal use only, and when President Dwight Eisenhower saw it, he was so shaken that he ordered it kept secret, afraid it would terrify the public—as it ultimately did. Within two weeks of the Lucky Dragon’s return to port, with the world now aware of the tests and pressuring the American government to open up, the film was released to the public.

The first 50 minutes of the film, about technical preparations for the test, look like the stuff of standard military public relations. But at minute 54:39, everything changes. There is a final silent moment as we watch the bomb drop. Then it goes off, and the terrifying destructive power of thermonuclear weapons, which the world had never seen, becomes frighteningly real. With a roar accompanied by ominous music, the massive fireball lights the sky like a false sun, and a towering mushroom cloud slowly surges high into the atmosphere. This dramatic sequence goes on with no narration for nearly two minutes.

The film then shows just how massive the fireball was by overlaying it on the skyline of Manhattan. Over more ominous music the narrator says, “the fireball alone would engulf about one quarter of the island of Manhattan.” Then there is a sequence showing the Pacific island on which the test was conducted, and the gaping ocean-filled crater that was all that was left of the island and surrounding reef after the explosion. A map of Washington DC is shown, and the narrator says, “with the Capitol at point zero there would be complete annihilation” for three miles in all directions.

These six brief minutes of film, released as a result of the Lucky Dragon incident, terrified the world.

Operation Ivy played repeatedly on US television stations, and within days was being shown in dozens of countries. People already knew about atomic weapons and the Cold War, but the film made them aware that thermonuclear weapons posed an existential threat to life on earth.

The Lucky Dragon created new fears in other ways as well. News coverage showed the contaminated tuna the boat had brought in. Japanese health authorities ordered tests on any fish caught in a 2,500-kilometer radius around the bomb test site. Thousands of samples were radioactively contaminated.

Officials at the US Atomic Energy Commission, which shared authority for the test program, tried to play down the risk, but food companies around the world shut off fish imports from Japan. And the media reported that the radioactive cloud from an atmospheric nuclear bomb test rose so high into the stratosphere that winds carried the fallout around the world. Many soon believed that the threat was not just to a few unlucky Japanese fishermen, but that potentially dangerous radioactive rain could ultimately fall everywhere, on everyone, endangering the whole world’s food and water.

The Lucky Dragon incident helped spread widespread fear of nuclear radiation into popular culture. The radioactive monster Gajira (known in subsequent Western films as Godzilla) rose from the sea on Japanese movie screens in the fall of 1954, just months after the Daigo Fukuryu Maru affair. In the original film, the crew of a fishing ship sees a strange orange underwater glow, recoils in terror at a blinding flash, and all that’s left is the charred hull of the empty ship bobbing in the waves. An ancient monster stirred to

life by an immense human-made explosion then tramples an island village, leaving radioactive footprints. The beast attacks Tokyo, a strange electric glow lighting up along his spine just before he blows steamy radioactive breath that sets anything on fire.

Screenwriter Ishiro Honda, who had earlier started to make a more conventional monster movie, later wrote that he was inspired to change the film by the Daigo Fukuryu Maru incident, and that he “took the characteristics of an atomic bomb and applied them to Godzilla.” The version shown in the United States two years later (adapted to be less anti-American) featured a radio journalist (played by Raymond Burr) watching the radioactive monster destroy Tokyo and telling his audience “I’m saying a prayer, a prayer for the whole world.” The message was clear. The terrifying risk from nuclear weapons and radioactive fallout was global.

The modern genre of mutants-caused-by-radiation movies quickly sprang up. Some books and sci-fi movies had already touched on radiation fears, but now the subject exploded into all forms of popular culture, and the radiation-zapped monster remains a mainstay bogeyman in films, books, and visual art. The fear was born as the “death ash” rained down on the crew of the Daigo Fukuryu Maru. A plastic Godzilla toy stands over the bookshop at the museum that houses the vessel’s remains.

The birth of modern environmentalism. The death ash played a huge role in creating the environmental movement as we know it. American biologist Barry Commoner, one of the founders of the movement to reduce air and water pollution from industrial chemicals, initially focused on the global environmental threat of radioactive rain. In 1956, Commoner was one of 24 Washington University scientists calling for a halt to atmospheric testing of nuclear weapons because of the threat it posed to human and environmental health. In 1958 he helped found the Greater St. Louis Committee on Nuclear Information. In the late 1950s, he helped run a study that documented trace amounts of a radioactive isotope in thousands of children’s baby teeth, the result of nuclear tests. Commoner would later say that the US government’s secrecy and dishonesty about the dangers of nuclear-weapon testing motivated him to act on environmental issues. “The Atomic Energy Commission turned me into an environmentalist,” he said in a 1993 interview.

In 1960, Rachel Carson published *Silent Spring*, a foundational work in the establishment of modern environmentalism. Most people see the book as a cry against the indiscriminate use of DDT and other industrial chemicals, but the global threat of radioactive fallout also helped inspire her to write it. “In this now universal contamination of the environment,” she writes, “chemicals are the sinister and little-recognized partners of radiation in changing the very nature of the world—the very nature of its life.” The central case made in *Silent Spring*, and by environmentalism generally, is that for all the benefits modern human-made technologies offer, they can also endanger the natural world. That belief profoundly shapes public attitudes and behaviors about a wide range of issues to this day. We have come to fear, not without reason, that the remarkable technological progress the world has enjoyed since World War II comes with frightening risks. Our threat perception has been shaped by Commoner, Carson, and the environmental movement they helped created. The Daigo Fukuryu Maru was the match that lit the fuse.

The danger from fear itself. Six months after the Lucky Dragon returned to port, Aikichi Kuboyama, the ship’s radioman, died. The official cause of death was liver failure, from which he had been suffering for years. But it was clear that radiation had weakened his immune system so much that that was what actually killed him. “Has the death of a citizen ever been watched by so many eyes?” asked the Asahi Shimbun newspaper. “They are the eyes of a strong anger and protest against the ‘ashes of death.’” Edward Teller, one of the brilliant people who developed the hydrogen bomb, commented dismissively that “it’s unreasonable to make such a big deal over the death of a fisherman.” How arrogant he was, and how utterly ignorant and mistaken. Kuboyama’s death *was* a big deal. Nuclear radiation was a

killer. (The rest of the crew survived but suffered life-long health problems associated with prolonged exposure to such high doses.)

The Japanese word for fear is *kyoufu*. Ironically, while the modern world's *kyoufu* of radiation essentially began with the Lucky Dragon incident and Kuboyama's death, another Japanese experience—the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki—has taught us that radiation is nowhere near as dangerous as we have come to assume. A total of 86,600 *hibakusha* have been followed with regular medical examinations for 71 years and compared to 23,000 Japanese who were not exposed to radiation. It stuns most people to learn this (it sure stunned me), but the overall increased radiation-induced cancer death rate among atomic bomb survivors—thousands of whom instantly received high doses of radiation from the bombs themselves, then experienced extended exposure to fallout in their air, water, and food—is less than one percent. “Atomic bomb disease” has killed a total of only 586 of those 86,600 survivors. At lower but still substantial doses –doses far higher than those caused to the public by the nuclear accidents at Chernobyl in 1986 or Fukushima in 2011—radiation has caused no change in disease rates compared to the normal rates among the control population. The children of the *hibakusha* have also been followed and studied, and show no multi-generational genetic damage passed down from their parents, though children born to pregnant women among the *hibakusha* did suffer a higher rate of birth defects. (The 70-plus year-long study of the atomic bomb survivors continues, conducted by the Radiation Effects Research Foundation in Hiroshima.)

Based on this hard-won knowledge, experts can say with confidence that the increased lifetime cancer mortality rate from Chernobyl will be just 3 to 4 percent above normal cancer death rates for the affected population, according to a 2006 World Health Organization study. The Fukushima nuclear accident is unlikely to raise the rate of any disease associated with radiation above normal. The doses to which people were exposed at Fukushima were nothing near those experienced by the *hibakusha* closest to the blast in 1945, and nothing like the intense doses received by the crew of the Lucky Dragon.

But though the information from health experts is reassuring, fear of radiation from Fukushima persists. It persists in the tens of thousands of people evacuated as a precaution when no one knew what was going to happen, who now won't move back even though radiation doses are low enough in most areas to allow them to safely do so. Families and entire communities have been decimated. Rates of unemployment, alcoholism, depression, and stress-related illnesses are elevated compared to other areas of Japan. As was sadly true for the *hibakusha* before them, some children from Fukushima prefecture are shunned and stigmatized when they travel.

The fear persists across Japan, where sales of agricultural products from the Fukushima prefecture are lagging, echoing past fears of contaminated tuna from the Lucky Dragon, even though we now know that the actual risk from the infinitesimal doses around Fukushima is practically zero.

It persists with the hundreds of billions of yen being spent to collect water running through the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant site. The water picks up a radioactive molecule called tritium, which the world's top experts all agree causes such a low dose to anyone exposed that it poses no threat to human health. (Some of the red and green exit lights in theaters, designed to stay on when the power fails, are filled with tritium.) Japanese authorities will probably release all that tritium-tainted water into the ocean. Though this would pose no threat to the environment, the very idea is facing fierce resistance, fed by excessive fear of anything connected to the word “radiation.”

Finally, *kyoufu* of radiation persists across Japan and elsewhere in the form of opposition to nuclear energy. Nuclear power produces neither greenhouse gasses, which contribute to climate change, nor particulate pollution, which sickens or kills tens of millions of people around the world every year. Having shut down its nuclear power fleet because of fear of radiation following Fukushima, Japan is now burning

more fossil fuels to produce electricity, contributing to short- and long-term health threats that are vastly greater than those posed by radiation. (So is Germany, and so are several US states.) Due to fear of radiation, some Japanese don't want to allow TEPCO, the electric company, to restart their Kashiwazaki Kariwa nuclear complex, where millions have been spent upgrading safety since Fukushima. Without revenue from that plant, TEPCO has to continue to borrow Japanese taxpayer money to pay for the clean-up at Fukushima, a multibillion-dollar effort to capture radioactive material that experts agree poses no threat to public or environmental health.

The fact that deep nuclear fear has persisted for so long, despite solid evidence that the risk isn't as great as we thought it was back in 1954, is perhaps the Daigo Fukuryu Maru Exhibition Hall's most profound lesson. The museum helps us understand the events and historic context that gave birth to our fear of radiation, and why it is so deeply engrained. It helps us realize how fear with such deep emotional roots is not readily overcome by objective consideration of the facts alone. It helps us see how easily fear can overpower reason, even when fear of a risk does more harm than the risk itself.

Fortunately, the museum also offers a cause for optimism. It suggests that with time, we might be able to put old fears in new perspectives. The curator of the Daigo Fukuryu Maru Exhibition Hall is Ichida Mari. When I visited recently I asked her what visitors to the museum say about Fukushima. She said there is still plenty of worry, but things seem to be changing. "At first after Fukushima people were feeling a lot more fear about it," she said, "but in the past three years, that fear and concern has decreased, and at the same time there has been a sense of increased knowledge about radiation."

Knowledge—based on history, scientific research, and experience—can help people in Japan and elsewhere move beyond their fears of radiation. Research on the psychology of risk perception has found that emotion and instinct play an oversized role in shaping our fears, and that once learned, those fears stubbornly resist change. But the research has also found that knowledge and time help give objective reasoning more influence over emotion as we make our choices and judgments about risk.

Knowledge from this obscure but immensely important little museum, plus knowledge from the study of the *hibakusha*, plus the amount of time that has passed since the Chernobyl and Fukushima disasters (31 and six years respectively) with no large death toll from either, might shift society's thinking about radiation. In that way, the Daigo Fukuryu Maru Exhibition Hall offers reason for hope.

Who has got rid of nuclear weapons?

March 18, 2018

News Navigator: Which countries have abolished their own nuclear weapons?

<https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20180318/p2a/00m/0na/003000c>

This December 1995 file photo shows the premises of a South African nuclear power company that produced six nuclear weapons, in Pelindaba, South Africa. (Mainichi)

The Mainichi Shimbun answers some common questions readers may have about countries that have abolished their own stockpiles of nuclear weapons.

Question: North Korea has apparently expressed its intention to carry out denuclearization, right?

Answer: Yes, but it's uncertain whether denuclearization will actually happen there. Motives for developing and possessing nuclear weapons include protecting one's country by preventing an enemy from attacking it. It would be difficult for a country to abandon its nuclear weapons if it considers there is

an external threat that cannot be countered without such weapons. Historically, not many countries have abolished their own nuclear weapons, but some have.

Q: Which countries have done this?

A: South Africa abolished about six nuclear weapons that were developed inside the country. In exchange for uranium from South African mines, nuclear technology and equipment were introduced from countries such as the United States, and production of enriched uranium -- as a material for nuclear weapons -- got underway in the 1970s. In 1979, the country completed its first nuclear bomb, and produced a total of six bombs by 1989.

Reasons for South Africa's nuclear program included isolation from the international arena due to policies such as apartheid, as well as the threat of the Cuban army stationed in nearby Angola during a civil war there, which broke out at the time of the Cold War.

Q: How was abolishment decided?

A: Then President F.W. de Klerk, who came to power in September 1989, ordered the abolition of the country's six nuclear bombs, as well as an additional bomb undergoing production in 1990 after having decided to end South Africa's nuclear program. The International Atomic Energy Agency later confirmed during an inspection in South Africa that all the nuclear weapons had been abolished.

Reasons behind the abolition include the waning of communism at the conclusion of the Cold War, the high costs of developing and possessing nuclear weapons, and a reduced threat from other countries. Some speculate that De Klerk also judged that nuclear weapons should not be passed on to the next administration for them to deal with after the end of apartheid.

Q: Have any other countries abolished their nuclear weapons?

A: Yes. Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakhstan. The nuclear weapons that were possessed by the former Soviet Union were passed on to Russia, which was formed after the collapse of the Soviet Union. In Ukraine's case, protection from Russia, the U.S. and the U.K. was a factor behind carrying out denuclearization. (Answers by Hiroaki Wada, Foreign News Department)

Saudi Arabia and the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)

March 21, 2018

Saudis show Non-Proliferation Treaty does the exact opposite

<http://campaign.r20.constantcontact.com/render?m=1117799148730&ca=c664d210-dd82-4c79-b2c4-2dc11f2b4821>

Article IV -- the inalienable right of nations to pursue the "peaceful atom" -- of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) is in reality a proliferation clause, argues Beyond Nuclear. It rewards countries who reject nuclear weapons programs with nuclear energy instead, setting up the materials and capability with which to transition to nuclear weapons production. This was boldly exemplified this week by Saudi Arabia which wants a nuclear power program but has admitted it would "without a doubt" use it to develop nuclear weapons if Iran does the same. The Saudis claim they are pursuing nuclear power so they can export their vast oil supply for profit -- rather than burn it at home. But why choose nuclear over the

more obviously suitable solar or wind energy if electricity is the objective? The answer is clear and proves that the NPT is enabling rather than deterring nuclear proliferation and bomb-making, and instead builds a bridge between nuclear power and nuclear weapons. Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed (pictured), who is leading the nuclear acquisition effort, is about to visit the US which is eager to get bankrupt American nuclear company, Westinghouse, in on a Saudi nuclear deal. But remarks about weapons intentions made by Mohammed to *60 Minutes* could affect the signing of an accord that is needed to allow nuclear trade between the two countries. More

Kim visits China and speaks of denuclearisation

March 28, 2018

N. Korea's Kim vows denuclearization in his historic trip to China

<https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20180328/p2g/00m/0in/100000c>

BEIJING (Kyodo) -- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un promised Chinese President Xi Jinping that Pyongyang will move forward with denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, Xinhua News Agency said Wednesday following Kim's visit to Beijing on his first foreign trip since taking power.

Kim's surprise visit to China from Sunday to Wednesday -- the time Kim's train crossed the border into China to the time it crossed back into North Korea -- came ahead of an expected summit between North Korea and the United States at which Washington is likely to strongly urge Pyongyang to take concrete steps toward denuclearization.

As U.S. President Donald Trump recently has named hawkish officials to key foreign policy posts, Kim appears eager to conduct negotiations with the United States with the backing of Xi, in the view of analysts.

Kim held a summit with Xi on Monday, state-run media in both countries reported after days of speculation, in Kim's very first meeting with the head of state of another country since becoming the North Korea's leader following the death of his father Kim Jong Il in 2011.

While South Korea welcomed the meeting, it increased concern in Tokyo that Japan is lagging behind other major countries in shaping the rapid unfolding of events involving North Korea since the start of the year.

During their summit at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, Kim told Xi that he is committed to denuclearization on the Korean Peninsula "in accordance with the will" of his grandfather, Kim Il Sung, and his father.

However, Kim added that it is up to the United States and South Korea whether the goal can be achieved, according to Xinhua.

"The issue of denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula can be resolved, if south Korea and the United States respond to our efforts with goodwill, create an atmosphere of peace and stability," Kim was quoted by the Chinese news agency as saying.

The Korean Central News Agency, Pyongyang's official media, did not report Kim's remarks on denuclearization.

Xinhua also reported Kim as saying the situation on the peninsula "is developing rapidly and many important changes have taken place," and agreeing with Xi that the two countries will deepen bilateral ties.

Relations between the neighboring Communist countries have been strained in recent years over Pyongyang's nuclear ambitions.

Regarding the meeting between Kim and Trump envisioned to take place possibly by the end of May, Kim said North Korea is willing to have a summit and dialogue with the United States, according to Xinhua. With a similar summit expected with South Korean President Moon Jae-in in late April, Kim said the North is determined to turn inter-Korea ties into a relationship of reconciliation and cooperation, the Chinese news agency said.

The North Korean leader said of his visit to China that he "aims to meet Chinese comrades, enhance strategic communication and deepen traditional friendship," Xinhua reported, indicating his desire to revive the two countries' "blood-brother" relationship since the 1950-53 Korean War.

Kim extended an invitation to Xi to visit North Korea, which was "accepted with pleasure," KCNA said. China is known as Pyongyang's main economic lifeline. But Kim, who has pursued nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles programs, had not previously met with Xi.

The summit was held as economic sanctions imposed by China and other countries weigh heavily on the North Korean economy.

Later Wednesday, Beijing rejected the possibility of easing sanctions against Pyongyang.

"As a permanent member of the U.N. Security Council, there is no doubt that China will fulfill its international obligations," Foreign Ministry spokesman Lu Kang told a press conference.

China for its part appears keen to get closer to North Korea to secure its ability to sway the course of events on the Korean Peninsula in the months and years ahead.

In Washington, White House press secretary Sarah Sanders issued a statement saying China on Tuesday briefed the United States on Kim's visit. The briefing included a message from Xi to Trump, the statement said.

China plans to send senior diplomat Yang Jiechi to South Korea on Thursday to brief South Korean officials on Kim's visit, according to the South's presidential office.

The office said Kim's denuclearization pledge "will have positive effects" on the North's possible summits with the United States and the South.

In Tokyo, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe told parliament later Wednesday that he takes a great interest in North Korea's movements and is gathering and analyzing information, adding, "We want to receive a thorough explanation from China."

On Sunday, a train similar to one used by Kim's father, who was known for shunning air travel, passed through the Chinese border city of Dandong, well-informed sources said earlier.

When a special train carrying Kim and his wife, Ri Sol Ju, arrived in Dandong, Chinese officials including Song Tao, head of the Chinese Communist Party's international department, greeted him, KCNA reported Wednesday.

It was the first time since August 2011 for a North Korean leader to visit China.

The train arrived at a Beijing station on Monday. Strict security was in place until the next day around the Diaoyutai State Guesthouse, where foreign dignitaries usually stay on their trips to Beijing.

The train carrying Kim and his entourage left Beijing on Tuesday afternoon after Kim, Xi and their wives had a luncheon at the guesthouse, KCNA said.

Kim's father, Kim Jong Il, visited China eight times during his tenure as North Korea's supreme leader.

Denuclearise N.Korea but how?

March 29, 2018

How will Kim tell his country he's ready to give up nuclear arms?

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2018/03/29/asia-pacific/will-kim-tell-country-hes-ready-give-nuclear-arms/#.Wrzcz38uCos>

by Josh Smith and Soyoung Kim

Reuters

SEOUL – State media calls North Korea's nuclear weapons a "treasured sword of justice."

Pyongyang has released commemorative stamps and built monuments in honor of its ballistic missile tests, while nuclear and rocket scientists have been named national heroes.

For Kim Jong Un, fully giving up nuclear weapons would mean a dramatic reversal for an authoritarian leader who has not only staked his security on his nuclear arsenal, but also spent years publicly celebrating such weapons as an integral part of his regime's legitimacy and power.

South Korean envoys who met Kim in Pyongyang earlier this month quoted Kim as saying he is "committed to denuclearization" and that he "expressed his eagerness to meet U.S. President Donald Trump as soon as possible."

Chinese officials who met with Kim in Beijing this week also said he committed to denuclearization, but initial North Korean state media reports on the visit did not mention the nuclear issue.

Absent any public confirmation from Pyongyang, analysts are skeptical Kim will suddenly give up the nuclear arsenal he and his family have spent decades developing.

Instead, Kim is likely to seek a more nuanced and long-term approach that could allow him to emerge looking victorious in the minds of his people and domestic elites, they say.

"Kim Jong Un does not need to sell anything to the North Korean population, particularly because denuclearization is a process that will take at least 10 years to realistically achieve," said Michael Madden, an expert on North Korea leadership at Johns Hopkins University's 38 North website.

"Pyongyang most likely envisions . . . a series of incremental agreements around this, rather than one or two large grand bargains."

Concessions needed

Former South Korean officials who have negotiated with the North in the past say such a pivot could be difficult, but not impossible — if the United States makes major concessions Kim Jong Un can take back and parade to his people.

"Kim Jong Un would seek to propagate the idea that he induced the U.S. and international community's 'surrender' by having mastered nuclear weapons," said Kim Hyung-suk, who served as the South's vice unification minister between 2016 and 2017.

"If talks go well, sanctions are eased and the economy grows. Then the people would understand Kim's denuclearization decision and become strongly supportive of it."

That may not be the kind of deal Trump envisions as he plans to sit down with Kim sometime in May for an historic first summit between sitting leaders of the two countries.

John Bolton, Trump's new national security adviser, recently said Trump should insist any meeting he holds with Kim be focused squarely on how to eliminate that country's nuclear weapons program as quickly as possible.

Silence in Pyongyang

The lack of comment from North Korean state media on the proposed talks between Kim and Trump was not unexpected, analysts said.

"It might reflect an ongoing internal discussion about how to deal with public opinion, certainly, although I would characterize that as a broader discussion of how to proceed overall," said Christopher Green, a senior adviser with the International Crisis Group, which researches conflict.

Given the importance he has attached to the weapons, and the money poured into their development, Kim will have to tread carefully to ensure any talk of abandoning the nuclear program started by his grandfather and continued by his father will not undermine his legitimacy at home, experts say.

To try to balance factions in his government, Kim Jong Un embraced a policy of *byungjin*, or simultaneous military and economic development, after he came to power in 2011.

Since 2013, the pro-military factions have been ascendant, but a Trump summit could lend heft to arguments by officials who prefer to prioritize economic development, Green said.

A number of military authorities and other senior elites might be less receptive to denuclearization.

"For them, it's unthinkable to ensure regime security with conventional forces alone, so they could object to Kim's decision and continue to argue for keeping the bombs," said Kim Hyung-suk.

'Forebears' teaching'

According to South Korean and Chinese officials, Kim Jong Un told them denuclearizing the Korean Peninsula was his forebears' teaching — a potential talking point if he does try to justify curtailing his much-vaunted nuclear program.

"It is our consistent stand to be committed to denuclearization on the peninsula, in accordance with the will of late President Kim Il Sung and late General Secretary Kim Jong Il," Kim told Chinese President Xi Jinping during a visit to Beijing this week, according to Chinese state media.

Kim Jong Un's father and grandfather both publicly promised not to pursue nuclear weapons, but secretly continued to develop the programs, culminating in the country's first nuclear test in 2006 under Kim Jong Il.

Even after that test, Kim Jong Il insisted in a 2007 summit with his South Korean counterpart that he didn't "have the intention to own nuclear weapons."

The history of failed negotiations with Pyongyang makes many observers, including former senior U.S. diplomat Evans Revere, skeptical the latest negotiations will be any different.

In past talks, North Korea had said it could consider giving up its arsenal if the United States removes its troops from South Korea and withdraws its so-called "nuclear umbrella" of deterrence from South Korea and Japan, a stance Washington has found unacceptable.

"Those of us who have negotiated with the North Koreans know what they mean (by denuclearization)," Revere said.

"About the only thing that the North Korean leader might need to 'sell' to his people — and particularly to the military — is the idea of a 'freeze' on some elements of his program."

N. Korea & denuclearisation

April 2, 2018

Editorial: Cont'd military pressure a must until N. Korea takes real steps to dump nukes

<https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20180402/p2a/00m/0na/013000c>

Annual United States-South Korea joint military exercises are underway. The exercises are intended both to prepare for a potential invasion of the South by North Korea and to maintain and strengthen the allied forces' combined operational effectiveness.

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- **【Related】** FM Kono hints at N. Korea nuclear activity amid easing tensions
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In most years, the exercises run for about two months from the end of February or the beginning of March. This year, however, the thaw in North-South relations prompted the exercises to be rescheduled for after the recent Pyeongchang Winter Games. The maneuvers will also run for about a month instead of the usual two, and U.S. aircraft carriers, nuclear submarines and strategic bombers will likely not participate. This presents quite a different picture from the situation last year, when the U.S. deployed aircraft carriers and other heavy-hitting strategic assets to the region to put pressure on the Pyongyang regime. It appears likely that Washington and Seoul are dialing back the scale of the maneuvers to the minimum with two landmark leaders' summits in mind: North Korean leader Kim Jong Un's April 27 meeting with South Korean President Moon Jae-in, and Kim's tete-a-tete with U.S. President Donald Trump, expected before the end of May.

Last month, Kim is said to have communicated his "understanding" of the South Korea-U.S. exercises to Seoul's special envoy, and indeed Pyongyang has shown no signs of reacting to the maneuvers. This suggests that North Korea is putting the coming talks with the U.S. first and exercising self-restraint. At one point, some in the South had suggested delaying the military exercises again out of respect for the coming talks. However, military pressure can be said to play an important role in diplomatic negotiations. In a situation where no clear path to a diplomatic goal is visible, it does not pay to constantly change plans. The U.S.-South Korea military maneuvers were canceled once, in 1992, when Pyongyang indicted it would accept United Nations International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspections. However, in the end this did nothing to halt North Korea's nuclear weapons development program.

Kim has used the term "denuclearization," and has signed up for talks with South Korea, the U.S. and China. Compared to the repeated military provocations of the past, this is obviously a much better state of affairs.

At present, however, it is difficult to say there has been any change regarding the North's nuclear and missile programs. The diplomatic environment has certainly improved, but it is still impossible to know whether Kim will back his words with deeds. Until Pyongyang makes concrete moves to denuclearize, it is impossible to ease back on both military and economic pressure on North Korea. Considering how things have gone in the past, this is a basic rule of negotiating with the North that cannot be neglected. North Korea must act if we are ever to get to the point where cancelling the U.S.-South Korea military exercises can be discussed.

Japan begged US to maintain nuke deterrence

April 2, 2018

Japan backed nuke deterrence before Obama's Prague speech

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201804020051.html>

By NAOTAKA FUJITA/ Staff Writer

Just months before then U.S. President Barack Obama famously called for a world without nuclear weapons, Japanese officials were urging the United States to maintain its nuclear deterrence in a hearing in Washington.

The call before the Congressional Commission on the Strategic Posture of the United States by officials of the only nation to be hit by atomic weapons in war took many in the U.S. government by surprise.

"Everybody, senators, congressmen, staffs of the government and experts are talking about this meeting," said Gregory Kulacki, a senior analyst with the Union of Concerned Scientists. "The (Japanese) Foreign Ministry said these kind of things and they were surprised."

Kulacki analyzed documents related to the compiling of a 2009 document with recommendations for U.S. defense strategy and spoke to Japanese officials who were consulted.

The bipartisan congressional commission, chaired by William Perry, a former U.S. defense secretary, met with Japanese officials in February 2009. Among those attending the hearing with panel members was Takeo Akiba, then a minister with the Japanese Embassy in Washington and now vice foreign minister. At that time, Taro Aso was prime minister.

At the start of their meeting, Japanese officials said, "Japan needs, and will continue to need, the U.S.'s extended deterrence."

They added, "Japan supports an ultimate goal of (a world) free of nuclear weapons. But the current security environment surrounding Japan requires the U.S.'s deterrence, including its nuclear deterrence." They also raised concerns about unilateral action by Washington on nuclear disarmament and said, "When the United States engages in nuclear reduction talks with Russia, China's nuclear expansion and modernization should always be borne in mind. Japan should be consulted well in advance."

They also said that a unilateral reduction of U.S. deployed strategic nuclear weapons could be counterproductive to Japan's national security.

The U.S. commission spoke with officials of other allies and compiled a final report in May 2009.

Among the recommendations presented to the Obama administration regarding Japan, the report said, "In particular, now is the time to establish a much more extensive dialogue with Japan on nuclear issues, limited only by the desires of the Japanese government. Such a dialogue with Japan would also increase the credibility of extended deterrence."

Discussions along those lines have continued since 2010 when a panel on extended deterrence was set up including high-ranking officials from Japan and the United States working on foreign policy and defense. James Schlesinger, who was vice chairman of the congressional commission, also touched upon the concerns held by Japanese officials in an interview in 2009 with The Asahi Shimbun. While he did not go into details about the specific concerns raised by Japanese officials to the panel he was part of, Schlesinger did say that he felt the concerns about whether the United States would maintain its extended deterrence were a reflection of Japanese public opinion.

Foreign Ministry officials with the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty Division would not confirm what Japanese diplomats at the time said on the grounds the congressional commission had not compiled official records of the hearings, which were held with the understanding that the proceedings would not be made public.

Notwithstanding Japanese concerns, Obama spoke in Prague in April 2009 about working toward a world without nuclear weapons. In December of the same year, he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in large part due to the Prague speech.

Clearly not on the same wavelength

April 11, 2018

North Korea and Trump's dangerous perception gap on denuclearization

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2018/04/11/asia-pacific/north-korea-trumps-dangerous-perception-gap-denuclearization/#.Ws3Fp38uCos>

by Jesse Johnson

Staff Writer

Washington's acknowledgment this week that Pyongyang is ready to discuss the "denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula" may sound like a step toward ridding North Korea of its hard-won nuclear weapons, but experts and observers say such a move is extremely unlikely in the near-term and highlights a potentially dangerous perception gap between the two countries.

The United States on Sunday said that it had directly confirmed for the first time since a thaw in relations began that North Korean leader Kim Jong Un is willing to discuss denuclearization during a highly anticipated summit with U.S. President Donald Trump set for sometime in the next two months.

What remains unclear, however, is whether the two sides, as well as South Korea and Japan, are on the same page in regards to what "denuclearizing the peninsula" would entail.

"North Korea has long said it would consider giving up its nuclear weapons program if the United States ended the 'hostile policy' toward it," said Vipin Narang, a professor of international relations at MIT.

But what this means exactly is ambiguous. Narang and others have noted that the "denuclearization" phrasing can be traced back to at least 1992, when the two Koreas signed the Joint Declaration of the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula — a legally binding commitment to ridding the peninsula of nuclear weapons.

"The phrase 'denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula' is interesting," Narang said. "Note it is not North Korean 'rollback' or 'disarmament' or 'relinquishing' its nuclear weapons, which imply unilateral action like in South Africa or Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine. It explicitly puts a demand on the United States, too."

At a minimum, Narang said, this demand would see Kim commit to scrapping his nuclear weapons only if the United States agreed to end its military alliance with South Korea. Kim would also likely insist that the U.S. pull back the "nuclear umbrella" it has extended over allies South Korea and Japan, and end its commitment to "extended deterrence" — its threat of nuclear retaliation if they are attacked by the North. Experts say such a deal would be almost unthinkable for the United States. But in the era of Trump — who has long voiced skepticism of U.S. alliances — many remain cautious that anything could be a possibility under the mercurial leader.

"I reckon Pyongyang will push for this, but I'm highly doubtful the U.S. will touch it, even despite Trump's fixation on deal-making," said Andrew O'Neil, an expert on North Korea and a professor at Griffith University in Australia.

O'Neil said that any indication of Washington "messaging with extended nuclear deterrence would trigger a major strategic reassessment of the alliance in Tokyo, major anxiety in Seoul — not to mention Canberra and in NATO capitals — and almost certainly result in the resignation of (U.S. defense chief Jim) Mattis and possibly a revolt in the Pentagon."

O'Neil said that "denuclearizing the peninsula" could also be interpreted differently depending on the party.

"Essentially, it means different things to different constituencies," he said. "For the Trump administration, at least for the hard-liners like (Secretary of State-designate Mike) Pompeo and (national security adviser John) Bolton, it connotes complete, verifiable and irreversible disarmament (CVID)."

Pompeo and Bolton are known hawks on North Korea, with both claiming that regime change there remains an option for ridding the country of its nukes.

For Kim, the concept of denuclearization is essentially a return to the 1990s, when Pyongyang agreed to visits by U.N. inspectors as well as limits on its nuclear and missile programs, O'Neil said.

"Denuclearization almost certainly means capping the program through commitments around a nuclear and missile testing moratorium," as well as possibly allowing a handful of International Atomic Energy Agency inspectors back into the country to verify fissile material accounting commitments, he said.

Kim has vowed never to part with his country's "treasured nuclear sword," which he views as the only thing that prevents regime change and keeps his family dynasty in power.

"Put another way, Pyongyang will conceive denuclearization as arms control, as distinct from disarmament," O'Neil added.

South Korea, especially President Moon Jae-in, "will want something in between these two extremes," while the Japanese position "will reflect the hard-line CVID posture."

It's these widely varied assumptions that could spell doom for hopes that a Kim-Trump summit might yield progress toward resolving the nuclear crisis.

"The danger is entering into negotiations with unrealistic expectations that Kim is just going to hand over the keys to his nuclear kingdom," said MIT's Narang. "He won't."

But Trump, who has surrounded himself with North Korea hawks in his Cabinet and who prides himself on his negotiating skills as a businessman, may be under the assumption that he can do what none of his predecessors could.

"Who else could do it, I mean honestly when you think," Trump said last month. "They're not going to send missiles up and I believe that, I really do. I think they want to do something. I think they want to make peace."

The president said Monday that the summit would be held sometime in May or early June, and that "hopefully we'll be able to make a deal on the de-nuking of North Korea."

It's unclear what kind of a deal Trump has in mind, but he and his surrogates have suggested that they will "leave fast" if progress in talks doesn't seem possible.

The question is, if he fails, will his business acumen kick in? And will he seek some kind of face-saving agreement that sells the U.S. and its allies far short of its goals, or might Trump take another look at his military options?

"The surest way for the summit to end in disaster is if President Trump enters with the false belief that denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula means Kim Jong Un unilaterally surrendering his nuclear weapons," said Narang. "When he doesn't do that, will Trump feel betrayed by Kim and set up by Moon?" Will he be "convinced that a long term negotiation that leads nowhere is a nonstarter ... and believe that North Korea can only be rolled back by force? That's one very real possibility."

The other, said Narang, is that the summit ends with “some grandiose statements but we just muddle along,” while the North’s nuclear weapons program advances, and maintaining Trump’s “maximum pressure” campaign “becomes difficult and unsustainable as China and Russia defect further.”

Japan agrees with IAEA on N. Korea denuclearisation

April 9, 2018

Japan to support IAEA on North Korea

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20180409_36/

Japan's Foreign Minister and the chief of the International Atomic Energy Agency have agreed IAEA inspections are necessary to verify North Korea's denuclearization.

Taro Kono met with IAEA Director General Yukiya Amano on Monday in Tokyo.

Their meeting comes as North Korea is showing willingness to hold dialogues with other countries.

The Foreign Minister said North Korea has yet to refer to its denuclearization. He stressed the North should allow verification of its moves in that direction.

Kono also expressed hope the IAEA will become more involved with the North's nuclear program.

Amano said it is still unclear how things will develop and the IAEA must work hard on the verification issue.

Kono conveyed Japan's willingness to support the IAEA's activity if North Korea accepts inspections.

N. Korea to suspend nuclear and missiles testing

April 21, 2018

North Korea says it has suspended nuclear, missile testing

<https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20180421/p2g/00m/0in/008000c>

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) -- North Korea said Saturday it has suspended nuclear and long-range missile tests and plans to close its nuclear test site ahead of a new round of negotiations with South Korea and the United States. There was no clear indication in the North's announcement if it would be willing to deal away its arsenal.

- **【Related】** Japan's Abe cautious about North Korea
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The North rather expressed confidence about its nuclear force, which leader Kim Jong Un declared as complete in November after a slew of weapons tests that included the underground detonation of a purported thermonuclear warhead and flight tests of three intercontinental ballistic missiles.

Some analysts believe Kim is entering the negotiations from a position of strength and is unlikely to accept a significant cut of his arsenal or go significantly beyond freezing a nuclear program. South Korean and U.S. officials have said Kim is likely trying to save his broken economy from heavy sanctions.

After the announcement Saturday about testing, President Donald Trump tweeted, "This is very good news for North Korea and the World" and "big progress!"

He also said he's looking forward to his upcoming summit with Kim.

South Korea's presidential office welcomed North Korea's announcement as "meaningful progress" toward the denuclearization of the peninsula. Presidential official Yoon Young-chan said in a statement that the North's decision brightens the prospects for successful talks between Seoul, Pyongyang and Washington.

The North's official Korean Central News Agency said the country is making the move to shift its national focus and improve its economy.

The North also vowed to actively engage with regional neighbors and the international community to secure peace on the peninsula and create an "optimal international environment" to build its economy.

The announcement came days before Kim is set to meet South Korean President Moon Jae-in in a border truce village for a rare summit aimed at resolving the nuclear standoff with Pyongyang.

A separate meeting between Kim and Trump is anticipated in May or June.

The North's decisions were made in a meeting of the ruling party's full Central Committee, which had convened to discuss a "new stage" of policies. The Korean Workers' Party Central Committee declared a "great victory" in the country's official "byungjin" policy of simultaneously pursuing economic and nuclear development.

The committee unanimously adopted a resolution that called for concentrating national efforts to achieve a strong socialist economy and "groundbreaking improvements in people's lives."

"To secure transparency on the suspension of nuclear tests, we will close the republic's northern nuclear test site," the party's resolution said.

The official news agency quoted Kim as saying during the meeting: "Nuclear development has proceeded scientifically and in due order and the development of the delivery strike means also proceeded scientifically and verified the completion of nuclear weapons.

"We no longer need any nuclear test or test launches of intermediate and intercontinental range ballistic missiles and because of this, the northern nuclear test site has finished its mission."

Seoul says Kim has expressed genuine interest in dealing away his nuclear weapons. But North Korea for decades has been pushing a concept of "denuclearization" that bears no resemblance to the American definition, vowing to pursue nuclear development unless Washington removes its troops from the peninsula.

South Korean scientists have questioned whether the North could continue conducting underground nuclear detonations at its mountainous test site in Kilju in the northeast due to a series of earthquakes that were likely triggered by the activity, suggesting it's too unstable for further bomb tests.

At the height of Pyongyang's standoff with Washington and Seoul last year, North Korean Foreign Minister Ri Yong Ho told reporters the country could conduct an atmospheric hydrogen bomb test over the Pacific Ocean.

Analysis of N.Korea Announcement

<https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/videos/20180421153017250/>

Japan, US discuss N.Korea weapons abandonment

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20180421_08/

The defense chiefs of Japan and the United States have agreed to demand that North Korea abandon all weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles, including those that can reach Japan.

Japanese Defense Minister Itsunori Onodera met US Defense Secretary Jim Mattis in Washington on Friday. The talks followed a summit between Japanese Prime Minister and US President Donald Trump held in Florida earlier in the week.

Onodera told Mattis that it is important to make North Korea give up all weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles, with the strong Japan-US alliance.

He added the abandonment of short- and medium-range missiles is especially crucial for Japan.

Mattis responded that North Korea is trying to open a new path to peace, but the move has to be closely watched.

Mattis said the North has been pursuing nuclear and missile development and the country has the issue of abductions.

Onodera said after the meeting that it was significant that Japan and the US confirmed their stance before a planned US-North Korea summit.

He added there should be a time limit for denuclearization.

April 21, 2018

N.Korea declares nuclear, missile test freeze

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20180421_12/

North Korea's state-run media reports that leader Kim Jong Un announced his country will suspend nuclear and missile tests from Saturday and will also shut down a nuclear test site.

The Korean Central News Agency reported on Saturday that Kim made the announcement at a plenary meeting of the ruling Workers' Party central committee in Pyongyang on Friday.

Kim reportedly said there is no longer the need for the nation to conduct any nuclear tests or test launches of medium and long-range as well as intercontinental ballistic missiles.

Kim also said the mission at the nuclear test site in the northern region has ended.

The Workers' Party also made clear that North Korea will cooperate and hold dialogues with neighboring countries to ensure peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula.

"We no longer need nuclear tests"

April 20, 2018

North Korean Leader Says 'We No Longer Need' Nuclear or Missile Tests

https://www.nytimes.com/2018/04/20/world/asia/kim-jong-un-hotline-korea.html?emc=edit_th_180421&nl=todaysheadlines&nid=324273210421

By CHOE SANG-HUN/APRIL 20, 2018

SEOUL, South Korea — North Korea's leader, Kim Jong-un, announced early Saturday that his country no longer needed to test nuclear weapons or long-range missiles and would close a nuclear test site.

"The nuclear test site has done its job," Mr. Kim said in a statement carried by North Korea's state media.

Mr. Kim's announcement came just days before a scheduled summit meeting with President Moon Jae-in of South Korea; Mr. Kim is also planning to meet with President Trump soon. It was the second time in two days that he made what appeared to be a significant concession to the United States but in reality cemented the status quo. North Korea already had stopped testing its weapons.

Mr. Kim made no mention in his latest remarks of dismantling the nuclear weapons and long-range missiles North Korea has already built. On the contrary, he suggested he was going to keep them.

Still, Mr. Trump welcomed what Mr. Kim said. "North Korea has agreed to suspend all Nuclear Tests and close up a major test site," the president said in a Twitter message. "This is very good news for North Korea and the World — big progress! Look forward to our Summit."

Mr. Moon's office also praised the announcement. "We view the North's decision as a significant step toward the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula the world has wished for," said Yoon Young-chan, a spokesman for Mr. Moon.

Despite the enthusiasm, American officials have watched Mr. Kim with a mix of satisfaction and wariness. The North Korean leader's move could be tactical — putting the United States on the defensive in advance of talks on its nuclear arsenal. By extending an olive branch, American officials said, North Korea is putting pressure on the United States to accept a deal before Mr. Kim agrees to give up North Korea's nuclear weapons.

Mr. Kim could also be trying to drive a wedge between the United States and South Korea, since President Moon has put great emphasis on ending more than six decades of conflict on the Korean Peninsula.

On Thursday, Mr. Moon said Mr. Kim had made a similar gesture, saying the North no longer insisted on the withdrawal of American troops from the Korean Peninsula. But White House officials privately dismissed the remarks, saying removal of the troops was never on the table.

Caution toward Mr. Kim's peace overtures also punctuated the reaction of officials from Japan, which North Korea has long threatened with missile strikes. The defense minister, Itsunori Onodera, who was visiting Washington when Mr. Kim announced the suspension of nuclear and missile tests, said the move was "not sufficient" because it did not clearly state whether the suspension included the short and midrange missiles that could hit Japan.

Mr. Onodera also emphasized that a suspension was far short of denuclearization. "What the international community expects is that North Korea abandon all weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles in a complete verifiable and irreversible manner," he said. "It is not a time to relax pressure by the international community, but we must keep applying pressure with an aim that they abandon their nuclear weapons and missiles."

In a statement after a meeting of the Central Committee of his ruling Workers' Party, Mr. Kim said his country required no further nuclear and long-range missile tests because it had already achieved a nuclear deterrent. It was now time to focus on rebuilding the economy, he said.

"From April 21, North Korea will stop nuclear tests and launches of intercontinental ballistic missiles," the Korean Central News Agency said, quoting Mr. Kim.

An arms announcement from North Korea came one day after North and South Korea installed what officials said was the first-ever hotline between their top leaders. Credit South Korean Presidential Blue House

It also said the North would "shut down a nuclear test site in the country's northern side to guarantee transparency in suspending nuclear tests."

To officials and analysts in South Korea, Mr. Kim's decision to shut down his country's only known nuclear test site, in Punggye-ri in northeastern North Korea, and his moratorium on long-range missile tests, are some of the "trust-building steps" that they have hoped Mr. Kim would take to help improve the mood for dialogue in Washington.

Mr. Kim spent last year conducting a series of nuclear and intercontinental ballistic missile tests, raising tensions and a risk of war with the United States. But he has initiated a dramatic about-face since January with a sequence of diplomatic maneuvers, including a summit meeting with President Xi Jinping of China in Beijing last month in his first trip abroad as leader, and his invitations to Mr. Moon and Mr. Trump for summit talks.

Analysts in the region are deeply divided over Mr. Kim's motives. Some argue that Mr. Kim just wanted to use negotiations to buy time and ease international sanctions, never intending to abandon his nuclear weapons. But others say that Mr. Kim would eventually give up his nuclear arsenal if he were provided

with the right incentives, such as security guarantees, like a peace treaty and normalized ties with Washington, and the economic aid he needs to rebuild his economy.

His latest announcement came one day after North and South Korea installed what officials said was the first-ever hotline between their top leaders, another sign of improving relations on the divided Korean Peninsula.

Mr. Moon was expected to use the hotline, which was installed in his office, to talk with Mr. Kim before the two leaders hold their summit meeting on the Korean border next Friday. But no date has been set for their first call.

The two Koreas have run a telephone hotline at the so-called truce village of Panmunjom — the site for the inter-Korean meeting — for years. Duty officers from both sides man their telephones at Panmunjom daily in case one side calls the other. The line has been cut off at times when bilateral relations have soured, but communications there have been restored.

But the two countries have never run a direct hotline linking their top leaders' offices, officials said. The hotline telephones were installed on Mr. Moon's desk in Seoul, the South's capital, and in the State Affairs Commission in Pyongyang, the North's capital.

When Mr. Moon's special envoys met with Mr. Kim in Pyongyang last month, the two Koreas agreed to install the hotline and arrange for Mr. Kim and Mr. Moon to use the phone before their summit meeting. In the same meeting, Mr. Kim said he was willing to negotiate with the United States on abandoning his country's nuclear weapons.

President Trump recently dispatched the C.I.A. director, Mike Pompeo, to meet with Mr. Kim to lay the groundwork for their meeting, which will be the first-ever summit meeting between the two nations. South Korean officials hope the hotline will improve communications between the top leaders and pave the way for improved ties between the two Koreas. The hotline could also be used to avert unintended armed clashes between the sides, they said.

"Now, if working-level talks are deadlocked and if our officials act like arrogant blockheads, President Moon can just call me directly and the problem will be promptly solved," Mr. Kim was quoted as telling the visiting South Korean envoys last month.

On Friday, aides to Mr. Moon and Mr. Kim officially opened the line and checked the connection for about four minutes, said Youn Kun-young, director for the government situation room at Mr. Moon's presidential Blue House.

During the line check, a South Korean and a North Korean caller briefly discussed the weather, according to Mr. Moon's office.

"The connection was very good," Mr. Youn said. "It was as if talking to a neighbor right next door."

Mark Landler contributed reporting from Washington, Motoko Rich from Tokyo and Rick Gladstone from New York.

Kono calls for disarmament

April 24, 2018

Japan calls on Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty members to push N. Korea further on nukes

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2018/04/24/national/politics-diplomacy/japan-calls-nuclear-non-proliferation-treaty-members-push-n-korea-nukes/#.WuBran8uCos>

Kyodo

GENEVA – Foreign Minister Taro Kono on Tuesday called on parties to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty to urge North Korea to go beyond a freeze of nuclear testing and seek a “complete, verifiable and irreversible” end to its nuclear program.

“North Korea’s nuclear and missile programs pose a grave challenge to the international nuclear non-proliferation regime,” Kono said in Geneva during the second preparatory committee meeting for the 2020 NPT review conference.

Kono said Japan welcomes North Korea’s promise last week to halt its testing of nuclear weapons and intercontinental ballistic missiles, and to dismantle its main nuclear testing site.

“We need to urge North Korea, however, to do more than what was announced,” he said.

He said the international community requires North Korea to sign and ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, or CTBT.

Kono also discussed the recommendations of a panel of experts assembled by the Japanese government for bridging the dialogue gap between countries seeking to abolish nuclear weapons and those that count on them as part of their defense.

Based on the recommendations, Kono said Japan is calling for the international community to improve the transparency of countries’ nuclear forces, establish a more effective verification mechanism for nuclear disarmament and address “hard questions” about “security concerns that may emerge from the nuclear disarmament process.”

Japan expressed fear over a further widening of the gap between the nuclear haves and have-nots to explain why it has refused to take part in a U.N. treaty banning nuclear weapons adopted last year, despite seeking a world free of such weapons.

The world’s nuclear-armed states and other countries that rely on the U.S. nuclear deterrent also sat out on negotiations for the ban treaty.

“A sovereign state must protect the lives and properties of her people. We need to seek security and nuclear disarmament simultaneously,” Kono said.

He said Japan, as the only country to have sustained wartime nuclear bombings, has a “responsibility to lead international efforts towards the elimination of nuclear weapons.”

The meeting is the second of three that will be held prior to the 2020 review conference. It began on Monday and will run through May 4.

Kono’s predecessor Fumio Kishida attended the first meeting in Vienna last year.

April 24, 2018

Kono calls for disarmament and security

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20180424_36/

Japanese Foreign Minister Taro Kono has stressed the importance of seeking nuclear disarmament while at the same time ensuring security.

Kono was speaking at a preparatory meeting on Tuesday for the 2020 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference in Geneva.

He explained the recommendations on nuclear arms reduction submitted to Japan last month by a panel of experts from countries that possess nuclear arms as well as from those that do not.

Kono stressed the need to build trust between countries that say nuclear arms are needed as deterrence and those that call for their abolition on humanitarian grounds.

He said Japan believes that creating realistic measures with the cooperation of nuclear-armed and non-nuclear nations is the path to a nuclear-free world.

Kono indicated that Japan will play a leading role in maintaining and strengthening the framework for nuclear non-proliferation.

He welcomed North Korea's announcement that it would halt its nuclear and missile tests, but warned about easing pressure against the country. He stressed that the international community must remain united to maintain maximum pressure.

Kono offered no comment on the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons adopted last year.

Hibakusha call for elimination of nuclear weapons

April 26, 2018

Hiroshima hibakusha call for nuclear abolition

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20180426_04/

Atomic bomb survivors from Hiroshima have appealed for speeding up the effort to eliminate nuclear weapons.

They gave a speech to state representatives at a preparatory meeting in Geneva on Wednesday for the 2020 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference.

80-year-old Michiko Kodama told the audience about her war-time experience. Then she said when the United Nations adopted the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons last year, survivors were elated that the door to abolishing nuclear arms has opened at long last.

But she noted that a long and winding road lies ahead as nuclear powers and their allies have not joined the treaty.

Kodama said mankind has come to a fork in the road: Will we protect this blue planet Earth, or choose the path of destruction?

She called on nations that have signed the NPT to swiftly and completely destroy their nuclear weapons.

Hiroshima Mayor Kazumi Matsui also took the podium. He said promoting the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons will be an important guidepost for the abolition of nuclear weapons.

Nagasaki Mayor Tomihisa Taue stressed that the nuclear weapons ban treaty and the NPT go hand in

hand. He said cities that have endured an atomic bombing are fully convinced that the nuclear ban treaty is a global norm.

Seeking "complete denuclearization"

read also : <http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201804270056.html>

April 27, 2018

Two Koreas agree to seek complete denuclearization

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20180427_50/

The leaders of North and South Korea have agreed at their historic summit to work for the shared objective of "complete denuclearization" of the Korean Peninsula.

South Korean President Moon Jae-in and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un signed a joint declaration following talks in the truce village of Panmunjom on Friday.

The summit was the 3rd of its kind and the first in 10-and-a-half years. Moon and Kim held talks at South Korea's Peace House in the morning. After a lunch break, they chatted by themselves during a stroll, followed by another meeting.

The "Panmunjom declaration" signed by the leaders notes that recent steps taken by the North have been "very meaningful" for the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

The steps apparently refer to Kim's announcement that the North will halt all nuclear tests and test-launches of inter-continental ballistic missiles, and shut down its nuclear test site.

The declaration says the 2 Koreas have affirmed their shared objective of achieving a nuclear-free Korean Peninsula through complete denuclearization, and that they will make active efforts to win international support and cooperation to achieve the goal.

However, the declaration does not address the key question of when and how Pyongyang will abandon its nuclear weapons. The issue was likely put off until the North's planned summit with the United States.

Moon and Kim also agreed that they will aim to declare the end of the Korean War this year, which marks 65 years since the 1953 armistice.

They say that in order to turn the truce into a peace treaty, they will actively seek 3-way talks with the United States, or 4-way talks joined by China.

On steps to ease tensions, the 2 sides agreed to halt propaganda broadcasts, the distribution of fliers, and

all other hostile acts near the military demarcation line from May 1st. They also agreed to eliminate all means to engage in such acts.

The 2 leaders further agreed to turn the demilitarized zone into a peace zone in a genuine sense, and to designate a maritime peace zone in the Yellow Sea west of the Korean Peninsula. This would prevent accidental military clashes.

The North and South also decided to set up a permanent liaison office in Kaesong in southwestern North Korea, to be jointly staffed by officials from both sides.

They plan to hold a meeting of each country's Red Cross officials to discuss the resumption of reunions of families separated since the Korean War.

The leaders also agreed that President Moon will visit Pyongyang in this autumn.

At a news conference held after the signing ceremony, Kim said he came to Panmunjom with a resolve to make life peaceful and to start a new future. He said he signed the joint declaration to achieve peace and reunification.

- Two Koreas agree to seek complete denuclearization
- Moon, Kim sign joint statement
- China welcomes inter-Korean summit
- Moon, Kim hold tree-planting ceremony
- Moon, Kim stroll together
- Japanese ministers comment on inter-Korean summit
- Kim: Leaders resolved to launch new era
- Moon: New era of peace has begun
- Moon, Kim commit peace, denuclearization
- People rally near demarcation line
- Kim, Moon aim to declare end of Korean War
- Moon, Kim to sign joint statement
- Heavy security for Kim
- Denuclearization discussed at inter-Korean summit
- Moon, Kim end morning session
- First session of inter-Korean talks end
- First conversation between Kim, Moon
- Inter-Korean summit's morning session ends
- Moon: World's attention focused on summit
- Kim vows to make history at inter-Korean summit
- Kim, Moon exchange remarks at summit
- Suga comments on inter-Korean summit
- Inter-Korean summit begins after ceremony
- Inter-Korean summit begins at Peace House
- Inter-Korean summit talks begin
- Kim crosses military demarcation line
- Kim Jong Un arrives at inter-Korean summit venue

- Kim Jong Un crosses military demarcation line
- Moon arrives at inter-Korean summit venue
- Moon leaves Presidential Office for summit
- South Korean President leaves Seoul for summit
- N.Korean media: Kim Jong Un leaves Pyongyang
- China: DF-26 advanced missiles already in service
- Inter-Korean summit to take place on Friday

"A madman's gun held permanently to our temple"



May 8, 2018

Time to ban weapons of male destruction

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2018/05/08/commentary/world-commentary/time-ban-weapons-male-destruction/#.WvLE9H8uBLM>

by Beatrice Fihn

GENEVA – As an advocate for the abolition of nuclear weapons, I don't have the luxury of mincing words. There are an estimated 15,000 nuclear warheads scattered around the world, and eliminating them means speaking truth — and often hard truths — to power. In that spirit, let me be unequivocal: **today's leaders are too emotionally unstable to be trusted with the world's nuclear stockpile.**

As I told the Nobel committee last year when accepting the Nobel Peace Prize on behalf of my organization, the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, nuclear arms are a “madman’s gun held permanently to our temple.” And it is mad men with their fingers on the trigger.

For reasons that I cannot fathom, nuclear weapons have been coopted as symbols of male power. In recent months, North Korean dictator Kim Jong Un and U.S. President Donald Trump have publicly bragged about the “size” of their buttons and the robustness of their arsenals.

Not to be outdone, Russia’s Vladimir Putin used his annual address to his country’s parliament to assert that Russia actually has the most potent nuclear weapons of all. He supported his braggadocio with fanciful animations imagining just how “invincible” his missiles might be.

It would be less concerning if the rhetorical warfare were contained to social media. But, all three leaders are prone to making hasty decisions that affect real people. For example, Trump reportedly launched a devastating trade war because he was “unglued,” and convinced during a meeting with steel executives that tariffs were a good idea. What if Trump had just attended a meeting with hawks eager to launch a preemptive nuclear attack on North Korea, or goad Iran into conflict? Now that John Bolton is Trump’s national security adviser, neither scenario is as fanciful as it was just a few weeks ago.

I am not trying to wage a gender war; nuclear weapons are dangerous regardless of who controls them. Nor am I suggesting that all men with power are unstable. History does include some prudent and visionary male heads of state. But the fact remains that eight of the world’s nine nuclear-armed countries are currently led by men (Britain is the sole exception). And, judging by the conduct of three of these leaders, the planet’s nuclear weapons are in terrifyingly impulsive hands.

I am tempted to absolve these leaders of their reckless rhetoric by blaming it on biology. Maybe it is simply in their genes to behave as brutes, lashing out recklessly when wounded or threatened. It’s hard to go against one’s nature, I might say. But to forgive Kim, Trump and Putin on these grounds would be sexist, and this is not a gender issue.

Rather, the issue is the existence of the weapons themselves. Throughout history, far more thoughtful leaders have brought the world to the brink of nuclear war and many were fortunate to pull it back. I am not so certain that such caution would or could be exercised today.

Nuclear weapons cannot be left to the whims and fancies of dictators, authoritarians and democratically elected presidents — gender notwithstanding. Conflict between nuclear states would unleash destruction so incomprehensible that, according to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, a humanitarian response would be impossible.

Given the risks, then, how do we proceed? There is only one answer: doing away with the weapons altogether.

For more than seven decades, leaders of nuclear-armed states have relied on an unstable compound of fear and luck to keep their populations safe from total destruction. But that luck is running out; at some point, an accidental or intentional launch will trigger global contagion. And with particularly fragile egos currently leading the world’s biggest (America and Russia) and most unpredictable (North Korea) nuclear-armed states, the doomsday scenario is simply too plausible for comfort.

The world as we know it could vanish with just one tweet across the Pacific from a “dotard” to “rocket man.” Nobody should have that kind of power in his (or her) hands. It’s time that we took these weapons away from everyone — before the most reckless leaders get us all killed.

Beatrice Fihn is executive director of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons. © Project Syndicate, 2018 www.project-syndicate.org

Using pressure to force denuclearisation?

May 6, 2018

N.Korea: Pressure will not resolve nuclear issue

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20180506_16/

North Korea has criticized the US and Japan for using pressure to achieve the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

A North Korean Foreign Ministry spokesperson made the remark via state-run media on Sunday.

The US administration has said it will maintain a policy of maximum pressure on North Korea until the country takes concrete measures for denuclearization.

The spokesperson said the actions of the US are a dangerous attempt to ruin the hard-won atmosphere of dialogue and bring the situation back to square one.

The spokesperson also said it would not be conducive to resolving the issue of denuclearization if Washington continued to pursue its pressure and military threats.

Analysts say Pyongyang is hoping that the US will ease sanctions through the planned US-North Korea summit and other dialogue.

An editorial in Sunday's edition of the ruling Workers' Party newspaper, Rodong Sinmun, also criticized Japan for trying to seek dialogue with the North by following the example of the US and South Korea. It says Japan is trying to take a free ride to Pyongyang, where a peaceful wind is blowing.

The editorial warns that Japan will not be able to step on North Korean territory for hundreds of millions of years as long as it retains such an insolent intention.

It demands that Japan should abandon the policy of maintaining pressure on the North.

What does it all mean?



This satellite image released March 30 shows the Punggye-ri nuclear test site in North Korea. The North said Saturday that it will dismantle the site between May 23 and 25, in a dramatic event that would set up leader Kim Jong Un's summit with U.S. President Donald Trump next month. | AP
May 13, 2018

North Korea wants the world to watch as it blows up its nuclear test site, but are there ulterior motives?

https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2018/05/13/asia-pacific/north-korea-hold-ceremony-dismantling-nuclear-test-site-may-23-25/#.Wvge_H8uCos

by Jesse Johnson

Staff Writer

North Korea wants the world to watch as it blows up its Punggye-ri nuclear test site, the country has said, announcing that it will hold a “ceremony” between May 23 and May 25, inviting foreign journalists to witness what it said would be a “transparent” event.

Skeptics, however, say Pyongyang may have ulterior motives for its announcement late Saturday, pointing to past demonstrations where it carried out similar spectacles to show its commitment to deals it later reneged on.

Leader Kim Jong Un had revealed the plans to shut down the nuclear test site during his summit with South Korean President Moon Jae-in last month, during which time the North Korean leader also pledged to work toward the “denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.”

“Dismantlement of the nuclear test ground will be done in the following sequence — making all tunnels of the test ground collapse by explosion; completely blocking entries; removing all observation facilities, research institutes and structures of guard units on the ground,” the North’s Foreign Ministry said in a statement carried by the state-run Korean Central News Agency.

“In parallel with dismantlement of the nuclear test ground, guards and researchers will be withdrawn and the surrounding area of the test ground be completely closed,” it added.

At last month's inter-Korean summit, Kim told Moon that he would shutter the site and invite foreign experts and journalists to view the dismantling, South Korea's presidential office said recently.

According to Saturday's statement, the Foreign Ministry would invite local press, but international media would be limited to journalists from China, Russia, South Korea, Britain and the United States, due to the testing ground's "small space."

It was unclear why journalists from Japan were not invited while media representatives from all other members of the now-defunct six-party talks on denuclearization — plus Britain — would likely be in attendance.

One reason could be that Pyongyang is looking to get Tokyo to ease its hard-line approach to the North. Tokyo has been one of the biggest backers of maintaining the U.S.-led campaign of "maximum pressure" on Pyongyang and has urged Washington to push the nuclear-armed country to abandon not only intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) that can hit the United States but also short- and midrange ballistic missiles capable of striking Japan, as well as its chemical and biological weapons stockpile.

"The North seems to have excluded Japan deliberately," Jo Seong-ryul, a researcher at the Institute for National Security Strategy, a think tank run by South Korea's spy agency, the National Intelligence Service, told the South's Yonhap news agency. "Japan has been trying to expand the agenda for denuclearization negotiations, and I think there is dissatisfaction with that."

A senior South Korean government official echoed this, saying that the decision to exclude Japan was likely part of Pyongyang's maneuvering to bring Tokyo to the negotiating table.

"I think it is related to the fact that official dialogue between the North and Japan has not yet been carried out," the official was quoted as saying.

Perhaps more importantly, though, Saturday's statement did not mention invitations to experts or international inspectors, and it was unclear if that offer had been rescinded.

The announcement comes days after Washington announced that the historic summit between Kim and Trump will be held June 12 in Singapore. South Korea, which has played the role of mediator to set up the meeting, has said Kim has genuine interest in relinquishing his nuclear weapons in return for economic benefits.

If the plan goes ahead, the timing would place it just as Moon visits Washington for a meeting with Trump on May 22.

Trump welcomed the North Korean announcement.

"North Korea has announced that they will dismantle Nuclear Test Site this month, ahead of the big Summit Meeting on June 12th," he tweeted. "Thank you, a very smart and gracious gesture! Thank you, a very smart and gracious gesture!"

A spokesman for South Korea's presidential office also welcomed the announcement Sunday, saying the move would help build trust ahead of the Trump-Kim summit.

Spokesman Kim Eui-kyeom also said that the North's invitation of foreign journalists highlights that the isolated country will carry out the dismantling in a transparent manner.

"We hope that the sound of dynamite blowing up the Punggye-ri tunnels will be a gun salute in a journey toward a Korean Peninsula free of nuclear weapons," he said.

Still, lingering doubts remain about whether Kim would ever agree to fully relinquish the weapons he likely views as his only guarantee of survival.

North Korea declared its nuclear forces complete late last year after it conducted its most powerful nuclear test to date in September and launched ICBMs that experts said were capable of hitting most, if not all, of the continental United States.

As part of talks to fine-tune the agenda for the Kim-Trump summit, the U.S. has reportedly demanded that North Korea ship some of its nuclear weapons, fissile material and long-range missiles out of the country within months after the meeting, Yonhap said Sunday, quoting unidentified sources.

The U.S. had said sanctions won't be relaxed unless the demand is met, the sources said, adding that the North's response was not known.

At a ruling party meeting last month, the North announced that it had suspended all tests of nuclear devices and ICBMs, and the plan to close the nuclear test site.

According to the South Korean presidential office, Kim told Moon that reports that tunnels at the Punggye-ri site had collapsed — making it unusable — were not true.

"Some say that we are terminating facilities that are not functioning, but you will see that we have two more tunnels that are bigger than the existing ones and that they are in good condition," Kim was quoted as saying.

The North Korea-watching 38 North blog said on April 30 that data detailing the test site acquired using synthetic aperture radar, a form of radar that creates two- and three-dimensional images of objects, including landscapes, corroborates Kim's statement that two tunnels remain viable.

The North also said for the first time at the ruling party meeting that it had been conducting "subcritical" nuclear tests. These refer to experiments involving a subcritical mass of nuclear materials that allow scientists to examine the performance and safety of weapons without triggering a nuclear chain reaction and explosion.

"The North Koreans probably have a high level of confidence in their basic nuclear design, having successfully tested a thermonuclear device last year," said Euan Graham, a former British diplomat who served in Pyongyang and who currently serves as the director of the International Security Program at the Lowy Institute in Australia. "That was their sixth nuclear explosion — the same number as India has conducted. If they need to refine the warhead design further, they probably have the capability to go on testing at a subcritical level and using computer simulations, as have the established nuclear powers."

The spectacle of the North shuttering and even destroying its nuclear facilities is not new.

In June 2008, international broadcasters were allowed to air the demolishing of a cooling tower at the Nyongbyon reactor site, a year after the North reached an agreement with the U.S. and four other nations to disable its nuclear facilities in return for an aid package worth about \$400 million.

But that deal, reached during the six-party talks, eventually collapsed after Pyongyang refused to accept U.S.-proposed verification methods.

Skeptics say Saturday's announcement amounted to the North Koreans selling something of little value in the quest for denuclearization in hopes of reaping the benefits, including media attention, in return.

"This is flogging a tired old horse and probably scoping for some international help for the environmental clear-up to follow," said Graham.

Others say the move could be underscoring an important shift away from nuclear weapons and toward the economy, which Kim has said his country is aiming to do.

"The news describing the North Korea closing of the nuclear test site is quite detailed," Joe Cirincione, president of the San Francisco-based Ploughshares Fund, which seeks to reduce nuclear weapon stockpiles, wrote on Twitter. "This is a serious move. I understand the skepticism of my colleagues, but something significant may be happening here."

Denuclearisation of N. Korea

June 1, 2018

**Kim Jong-un says North Korea committed to denuclearisation as he announces Russia summit
Earlier in the day, US secretary of state Mike Pompeo urged North Korean regime to abandon its emphasis on developing a nuclear arsenal**

- Jeremy B White San Francisco

Reuters

North Korean leader Kim Jong-un said his desire to denuclearise the Korean peninsula remained “unchanged, consistent and fixed”, according to state media, hours after America’s top diplomat urged Pyongyang to seize an historic opportunity to shutter its nuclear programme.

As American and North Korean leadership work to arrange a meeting between Mr Kim and Donald Trump next month, the North Korean leader announce that his country would hold a bilateral summit with Russia. He made the pledge while meeting with visiting Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov.

In a whiplashing week of diplomatic manoeuvring, Mr Trump declared the meeting with Mr Kim off before reversing and saying his administration was working with Pyongyang to hold the summit as planned.

Read more

- Mike Pompeo says North Korea needs 'bold leadership' on nuclear talks
- Russia's chief diplomat to visit North Korea ahead of Trump-Kim summ
- American officials scramble to salvage North Korea summit

Even as Mr Trump and administration officials projected confidence that the meeting would proceed, Mr Kim used his meeting with Mr Lavrov to both underscore his commitment to a nuclear deal and to chastise the US.

The North Korean leader reportedly bemoaned “US hegemonism” to Mr Lavrov. Pyongyang has long denounced what it calls America’s imperialistic aggression, warning that joint military exercises with South Korean troops are rehearsals for an invasion.

But Mr Kim also reiterated his willingness to wind down North Korea’s nuclear programme, a condition he backed in proposing the extraordinary meeting to Mr Trump.

North Korea announces intercontinental missile launch

Earlier in the day, US secretary of state Mike Pompeo emerged from talks with a leading North Korean official to say the regime had a “once-in-a-lifetime opportunity” to relinquish its pursuit of nuclear arms as a means to safeguard its power.

North Korea has long seen a nuclear arsenal as “providing the security it needed for the regime”, Mr Pompeo said, but he hoped to convince his counterpart that “the real threat to their security is the continued holding onto that nuclear weapons programme, and not the converse”.

“I believe they are contemplating a path forward where they can make a strategic shift, one that their country has not been prepared to make before”, Mr Pompeo said.

More about: | Kim Jong-Un | North Korea | Russia

Now it's time to deliver

June 13, 2018

Now, it's time to deliver

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A Bulletin Editorial

This byline is used with opinion pieces that express the institutional position of the *Bulletin* on issues of public import, as decided by its chief executive officer and editor in chief..

The *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* favors all dialogue aimed at reducing nuclear risks, and it therefore supports US President Donald Trump's decision to engage with North Korean Chairman Kim Jong-un in Singapore.

But media pomp and video symbolism cannot substitute for arms control substance. The high-level goals listed in the joint statement Trump and Kim issued after their meeting are extremely vague, but concrete steps are required, if the nuclear risk that North Korea poses to the United States and the international community is to be reduced. The vagueness of the joint statement creates a distinct possibility that it will quickly evaporate, with regrettable—and possibly catastrophic—results for the region and the world. The *Bulletin* is deeply concerned the United States has already committed to cease large-scale military exercises in Northeast Asia without, apparently, first consulting its South Korean allies. This move is part of a deeply problematic pattern, in which the Trump administration aligns with dictators at the expense of longtime US allies and important multinational agreements. It is a pattern that must end, if negotiations with North Korea are to have any chance of succeeding.

As a next step, the United States and North Korea need to agree in specific terms on the characteristics of a “freeze” in activities that would continue during negotiations that could well take years to complete. The United States should insist that the North formally agree to cease all nuclear weapons tests, missile launches, and fissile material production while talks continue. Without such an agreement, talks could drag on fruitlessly for years, perhaps even acting as a cover for continued development of North Korea's nuclear capabilities.

The *Bulletin* encourages the United States and North Korea to seek assistance from a wider range of scientific and policy experts, within and outside their governments, during negotiations. Such technical advice is absolutely necessary, if North Korea's nuclear program is to be dismantled in a verifiable way that serves the security interests of both countries and, just as important, the interests of South Korea and Japan, longstanding US allies who are vital to securing peace in Northeast Asia.

Notwithstanding the gauzy verbiage of the Singapore joint statement, we think it unlikely that negotiations will soon achieve the complete denuclearization of North Korea (if that goal is ever reached). But the nuclear risk that North Korea poses to the world can be reduced and managed, if negotiations follow a concrete, verifiable, step-by-step roadmap. Frankly, that roadmap should have been drawn long before the Singapore meeting occurred. It should be drawn now.

We are hopeful that yesterday's meeting in Singapore was a first step toward a safer Korean Peninsula, but we remain doubtful about prospects for progress in this regard, given the Trump administration's erratic approach to international affairs. When top-level scientific experts from the US national laboratories and elsewhere are brought into the North Korean talks—as they were for the Iran nuclear deal that President Trump has tried so hard to sabotage—we will know his administration is as serious about the substance of addressing North Korea's nuclear program as it is about the styling of grand public relations events.

What should be done with Japan's plutonium stockpiles?

June 17, 2018

Japan to cap plutonium stockpile to allay U.S. concerns

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201806170027.html>

THE ASAHI SHIMBUN

Japan plans to boost measures to curb surplus plutonium extracted from the reprocessing of spent fuel at nuclear power plants, including capping the country's stockpile of the highly toxic material.

The move followed the U.S. and other countries' calls for Japan to reduce excess plutonium in light of nuclear nonproliferation and the threat of terrorist attacks involving nuclear materials.

The Cabinet Office's Japan Atomic Energy Commission will incorporate the measures in the five-point basic nuclear policy expected at the end of this month, the first revision in 15 years.

A reduction in the volume of plutonium held by Japan will also be specified in the government's basic energy plan, which will be revised next month.

Japan possesses about 10 tons of plutonium inside the country and about 37 tons in Britain and France, the two countries contracted to reprocess spent nuclear fuel. The total amount is equivalent to 6,000 of the atomic bomb that devastated Nagasaki in 1945.

In the policy, announced in 2003, the government vowed not to possess plutonium that has no useful purpose. The government has pledged not to have surplus plutonium to the International Atomic Energy Agency.

But the prospect for substantially curtailing the country's plutonium stockpile is becoming increasingly murky as the Monju prototype fast-breeder project has been abandoned.

The government decided in 2016 to decommission the Monju reactor in Tsuruga, Fukui Prefecture, which has seldom been in operation over the the past two decades due to a slew of problems.

Monju was designed to use plutonium recovered from spent fuel from other reactors as a key component of the government's nuclear fuel recycling program.

Japan can reprocess spent nuclear fuel under the Japan-U.S. Nuclear Cooperation Agreement.

The 30-year pact is expected to be automatically extended beyond its expiration on July 16.

After the expiration, however, the pact will be scrapped six months after either Japan or the United States notifies the other side of its intention to do so.

Foreign Minister Taro Kono has expressed concern about the "unstable" future of the agreement after July, and Japan has worked to meet a request from Washington to clearly spell out steps to reduce Japan's plutonium stocks.

The government's draft policy calls for allowing retrieval of plutonium strictly based on the projected amount to be used at conventional nuclear reactors as mixed plutonium-uranium oxide fuel, commonly known as MOX fuel.

It will also step up oversight on utilities with the aim of reducing the amount of plutonium to a level allowing the nuclear reprocessing plant under construction in Rokkasho, Aomori Prefecture, and other facilities to operate properly.

In addition, electric power companies will cooperate with each other in the use of MOX fuel, so that the amount of Japan's surplus plutonium that is now overseas will be reduced.

For example, Kyushu Electric Power Co. and Kansai Electric Power Co., two utilities that began using MOX fuel ahead of other utilities, will consider using more MOX fuel at their nuclear plants for the benefit of Tokyo Electric Power Co., whose prospect of bringing its Kashiwazaki-Kariwa nuclear power plant in Niigata Prefecture back on line remains uncertain.

When the 2.9 trillion yen (\$26.37 billion) reprocessing plant in Rokkasho goes into full operation, about eight tons of new plutonium will be added annually as Japan's surplus plutonium.

The Federation of Electric Power Companies of Japan, an electric power industry group, estimates that MOX fuel should be used at 16 to 18 reactors to keep the amount of Japan's plutonium from rising.

But of nine reactors that have resumed operations following the introduction of more stringent safety standards after the Fukushima No. 1 nuclear disaster in 2011, only four can use MOX fuel.

The operation of the Rokkasho plant will likely be significantly curtailed even if it is completed amid that environment.

(This article was written by Yusuke Ogawa, Rintaro Sakurai and Shinichi Sekine.)

First anniversary of the nuke ban treaty



Activists call on the government to ratify the nuclear ban treaty in Sendai on July 7, a year after the United Nations adopted the treaty. (The Asahi Shimbun)

July 9, 2018

EDITORIAL: Let our voices be heard to prod Japan to act on nuke ban treaty

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201807090037.html>

July 7 marked the first anniversary of the adoption of the first-ever legally binding international agreement to comprehensively prohibit nuclear weapons.

The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, reached a year ago at the United Nations, bans the development, possession and use of nuclear arms.

With the world's nuclear powers, led by the United States and Russia, making little progress toward slashing their nuclear arsenals, about two-thirds of the U.N. member countries voted for the treaty.

The challenge facing the world is how to capitalize on the landmark pact to bring itself closer to a future free from nuclear weapons.

Japan, as the only country that has suffered from the ravages of a nuclear attack, should lead global debate on this challenge. But the Japanese government has never stepped up to the plate, deterred by the fact that Japan is protected by the "nuclear umbrella" provided by the United States.

While promising to serve as a "bridge" between nuclear powers and nonnuclear countries, Tokyo has been keeping a distance from the nuclear ban treaty.

We must not forget that survivors of the 1945 atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, or hibakusha, had provided a great incentive for the adoption of the treaty by recounting their stories about the inhumane nature of nuclear arms.

The relatively small countries that served as the driving forces behind the agreement, including Austria, received vital support from nongovernmental organizations across the world. Various messages calling for the abolition of nuclear arms should also be sent out from Japan.

One notable trend that has emerged in Japan over the past year is a wave of support for the treaty among local assemblies.

More than 320 local assemblies, or about 20 percent of all local governments, have adopted proposals calling on the central government to join the nuclear ban treaty.

In June, the Joetsu municipal assembly in Niigata Prefecture unanimously adopted a written opinion urging the government to sign the treaty.

The assembly heard a hibakusha, an 89-year-old woman, tell her story about surviving the devastation of Hiroshima at the age of 16. She is the leader of one of the citizen groups that petitioned the assembly to take the step.

One assembly member described her story as "powerfully moving," while another said it had a "great impact" on the assembly.

One conservative member of the assembly said, "We have to urge the government to give serious attention to the feelings and anger of hibakusha and ensure that Japan, as the atomic-bombed nation, will make all-out efforts for the abolition of nuclear weapons."

"We want the government to shed its reluctance and take action instead of simply sitting on the fence.

The town assembly of Shiriuchi, Hokkaido, unanimously adopted a similar opinion in December last year and again in June this year.

The assembly twice took the action because the government has been slow to act.

Although Shiriuchi is a small town of slightly more than 4,000 residents, "We cannot just sit quietly without doing anything," said a female member of the assembly, who led the move to adopt the petition.

Many other local assemblies have unanimously adopted similar opinions. This fact indicates that the wish to see a world without nuclear weapons is widely shared across political boundaries.

Many citizen groups across the nation have also been engaged in various activities to promote public support for the treaty, such as signature campaigns to call on countries to join the treaty.

One group organized an event in which participants are encouraged to write their wishes for a nuclear-free world on “tanzaku,” or strips of paper on which people write wishes in the traditional “Tanabata” (Star Festival Day) in Japan, which is celebrated on July 7.

For the treaty to take effect, 50 countries need to ratify it. So far only 11 have done so.

It has been reported that nuclear powers are putting “pressure” on countries not to ratify the treaty.

Each of us needs to make tenacious efforts to get the government of the atomic-bombed country out of its inaction to push forward the movement to put the treaty into effect.

Nuclear Japan-US pact on reprocessing extended

July 18, 2018

Japan To Continue Fuel Cycle Policy As Nuclear Pact With US Is Extended

<https://www.nucnet.org/all-the-news/2018/07/18/japan-to-continue-fuel-cycle-policy-as-nuclear-pact-with-us-is-extended>

18 Jul (NucNet): A nuclear pact between Japan and the US has been automatically extended, allowing Tokyo to continue to reprocess spent nuclear fuel, extract plutonium and enrich uranium.

The bilateral Japan-US pact, which came into force in July 1988, puts Japan in the position of being the only country without nuclear arms that is allowed to reprocess spent nuclear fuel, press reports said.

Japan has long limited its nuclear research, development and energy uses to peaceful purposes.

However, there are reports that the US is increasingly concerned about Japan’s growing reserve of plutonium, a material which can be used to create nuclear weapons.

An energy policy plan approved by Japan earlier this month re-endorses using the nuclear fuel cycle, in which plutonium extracted from spent nuclear fuel at nuclear plants is used to generate power.

But the plan, noting calls from the US, said that Japan will make efforts to cut its stockpile of plutonium, which can be used in making nuclear weapons.

According to the Japan Atomic Industrial Forum (Jaif), Japan holds about 47 tonnes of plutonium. Of that 47 tons, around 10 tonnes were stored within Japan and the remainder in the UK and France as of the end of 2016, according to government data.

Spent nuclear fuel containing plutonium from nuclear power plants in Japan is sent to the UK and France for reprocessing and eventual fabrication into uranium-plutonium mixed oxide (MOX) fuel before being returned to Japan.

Most nuclear power plants in Japan remain offline following the 2011 Fukushima-Daiichi nuclear accident and need to pass revised safety regulations before they can be restarted.

The administration of prime minister Shinzo Abe has maintained its pro-nuclear policy, saying that plants able to clear the new stricter safety checks will resume operations.

The energy plan calls for a nuclear share of around 20-22% by 2030. Jaif has said about 30 reactors must be brought back online to meet the target.

Nuclear regulators are also still assessing the safety of a planned spent nuclear fuel reprocessing plant in northeastern Japan after delays to its commissioning.

When fully operational the Rokkasho plant, a key pillar of the country's nuclear fuel recycling policy, will be able to produce around eight tonnes of plutonium a year, the Japan Times reported.

Toward a world free of nuclear weapons



Friday, July 27

Pursuing a World Free of Nuclear Weapons

<https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/nhknewsline/backstories/freeofnuclearweapons/>

Every year on August 6th, thousands of people come to Hiroshima to remember the day the city was devastated by an atomic bomb at the end of World War II.

This year, Tim Wright was among the visitors. He is one of the founding members of ICAN, a global coalition of civil groups working toward a world free of nuclear weapons. It was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2017.

He spoke to NHK World's Miki Ebara about the award and how the group is pushing forward.

Nobel Peace Prize Medal to Hiroshima and Nagasaki

You brought a replica of Nobel Peace Prize to Hiroshima, and it is going to travel to Nagasaki. What do you think this will mean to the people of the two cities?

It's our great honor to loan the medal to those two cities, and we hope everyone who visits the museums will be inspired to take action for a world free of nuclear weapons. They will learn the impacts of the bombings and they will learn about the movement globally to eliminate these weapons. It was really nice to see school students in Hiroshima looking at the medal and understanding why it was awarded to our campaign.

I think that seeing something like that as a student can plant ideas in their minds about what they should do with their lives. I hope even if it inspires one person to take action, that's really meaningful.

What do Hiroshima and Nagasaki mean to you and ICAN?

I remember learning about the bombings as a child and being horrified that people would inflict such suffering on other human beings and I was shocked to learn also that there are still thousands of these weapons in the world.

I couldn't quite comprehend how we could witness such misery and understand what these weapons could do, but yet still countries would cling to the weapons. So for me it was very moving to visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki for the first time in 2010. And I have been back on a number of occasions and every time I hear from survivors of the bombings, I am horrified again and it never ceased to shock me what they went through.

"Pushing countries to work faster"

7 years after your first visit to Hiroshima, ICAN won the Nobel Peace Prize and the Nuclear Weapon Ban Treaty came into being. Did you think all this was possible in such a short period of time?

I was very optimistic we could bring about change. We launched our campaign in 2007 in Melbourne, which is where I am from. I thought we could get this treaty very quickly--it took longer than I had expected.

But this was a very special moment in 2017. When 122 countries finally adopted the UN Weapons Ban Treaty, many of the hibakushas commented that they had been waiting for that day for more than 70 years. And they were overjoyed that it had finally arrived. It has tremendous meaning for them and they have high expectations for the results that this treaty will produce.

We as a campaign owe it to them to make sure this treaty is effective, to make sure that we will work as hard as we can to bring every last country on board.

The treaty has been ratified so far by 12 countries. What do you think of this pace?

I think the pace of ratification today is quite normal. I wouldn't describe it as slow or as fast. If you look at the pace of ratification for the Non-Proliferation Treaty, it is exactly the same as it is for the Nuclear Weapons Ban Treaty. Same for the biological weapon convention,

At the 10 month mark, where we are now, the chemical weapons convention had only 4 ratifications, and the comprehensive nuclear test ban treaty had just 4 ratifications. We are doing much better than those treaties. But we will be pushing countries to work faster and faster. So we can bring it into force next year.

You have been working as ICAN's Treaty Coordinator and traveling the world, lobbying lawmakers for their support. Can you tell us about your work?

Most of these countries supported the treaty. That was evident in the vote of adoption and they are now in the process of ratifying it.

We know it's before the parliaments, but it takes time to go from one parliament to the next. Often it's reviewed by a committee and then open to public debate as well. They are going through the process.

My job as Treaty Coordinator is to ensure all the campaigners around the world have the necessary resources and means to operate in their countries to speed up the ratification process. I think there's a strong will by most countries to get this treaty into force quickly.

"Take direction from their own people, not from foreign powers"

Do you feel countries that are under a nuclear umbrella, or are members of organizations like NATO, are under pressure from nuclear armed-states?

There's a lot of pressure in NATO for all of the countries to stick together in opposing this treaty. But we know there are prime ministers, foreign ministers in NATO countries who would personally like to see their countries join the treaty and then pushing internally to make that happen. And it's a matter of time before a country breaks from a pack.

It doesn't mean abandoning NATO, it just means they are taking a different position on nuclear weapons among NATO. Once one country breaks from the pack, others will follow. And there's very strong public support in most of these countries for nuclear disarmament. We conducted polls in a number of these countries in Europe that host US nuclear weapons on their territories and about two-thirds of the people said they want their countries to join the treaty.

We've also got a pledge that parliamentarians in their country are taking to work to get their country to join. And hundreds are signing up to this pledge. Change is inevitable. These are not acceptable weapons. Look what happened in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It's impossible for these politicians to justify to their citizens why they are currently opposing the treaty.

You said you would like to reach the 50 country-mark by next year for the treaty to enter into force. (* Ratification by 50 countries is needed for the treaty to come into effect. As of July 25 2018, 12 countries have ratified.)

I think we can make this treaty into force in 2019 based on the information that we have on the ratification process that is underway. I think that's achievable. We know there's a lot of pressure, particularly from the US, France, and UK. In many cases, that's the former colonies they are pressuring. When we meet African states, for example, and talk about this issue, they tell us about the pressure they are feeling. But they are sovereign nations and they should take direction from their own people, not from foreign powers. I think they feel a great deal of resentment and anger at the pressure they are receiving. That could have the opposite effect that nuclear armed states want, because it makes them more assertive. The best way for these countries to alleviate it is to join the treaty. There would be no reason the weapon states could pressure them.

"Japan isn't a bridge builder on this issue"

Hiroshima and Nagasaki are the only two cities that have been attacked by nuclear bombings and yet Japan is not taking part in the treaty. How are you going to persuade the government to change its positions?

Many of the hibakusha I met in Hiroshima said to me just how sad and disappointed they are in the Japanese government. They felt that they are betrayed by their government. Mayor Taue of Nagasaki said it's completely incomprehensible to the people in the A-bombed cities that Japan failed to participate in this historic treaty making process.

There's only one reason why Japan is refusing to join this treaty and that's it believes the US nuclear weapons keep it safe. I don't think Japan's security is enhanced by US nuclear weapons. That's simply not the case--the existence of these weapons anywhere in the world really undermines the security of us all. The reason that countries negotiate this treaty is because they want to enhance the security of their own people. They want to enhance humanity so this is very much an initiative aimed at promoting security.

I think that Japan will join the treaty. It may take longer than we would like. But there will be so much pressure from the international community and there will be so much pressure from hibakusha and other members of Japanese society that the government won't be able to ignore their voices. They need to respond to their people and not just take directions from the US or whoever it might be who is telling them what their policy is on the treaty.

Some critics in Japan of the treaty will say, 'Look at the nuclear threat from North Korea--we are safe because we are under the US nuclear umbrella.' What's your response to that?

Many countries around the world feel threatened by nuclear weapons but they don't claim protection of the nuclear umbrella but in fact they're doing the opposite which is really pushing nuclear weapons to be banned.

That's how Japan can enhance its security. If Japan is concerned about the threat of North Korea, which it is, then they should be working for disarmament. I think the Japanese government is undermining the cause of disarmament by taking the approach it has taken. These are completely illegitimate weapons. And the Japanese government has not said that. They won't say that. Because that is contradictory to the policy of extended nuclear deterrence.

That really weakens Japanese credibility on this issue. And it really prevents Japan from making meaningful contributions for a nuclear weapon-free world. So I would like to see Japan take a completely different approach to this and show leadership in Northeast Asia, show that it is the country in this region that is a leader on this issue that has stated clearly, 'Nuclear weapons are not acceptable for all.' I think that would be a much better way to promote the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, as well as disarmament more broadly.

The Japanese government claims that they want to be a bridge between the non-nuclear weapons and nuclear weapons countries.

Japan isn't a bridge builder on this issue. Japan has sided with the nuclear armed states. That is very clear. Japan isn't properly engaging with any of the countries that support the nuclear weapons ban treaty. In fact, most of the world's countries now perceive Japan as a big part of the problem, and that's really shocking to many of the hibakusha who would like their country to be seen by the international community as a force for good in the world on this issue. It's got to change. This is not OK for Japan to be taking this position.

"Active support, then the government needs to respond"

Why do you think there is a huge gap, as you say, between what people in each country want and what their policymakers want?

I think a part of the problem is that many of the people who support nuclear disarmament aren't speaking out. You know this passive support but they need to turn this into active support. Then the government needs to respond. They'll need to change the position.

When I was in Hiroshima, I said to the people that any politician who refuses to support this treaty doesn't deserve your vote and if we all refuse to vote for opponents of the treaty, then that's how we will bring about change.

I hope some of the young anti-nuclear activists in Hiroshima will run for parliament. They will be the politicians making the decisions on this in the future. I encourage them to do so. A lot of people don't realize how powerful they themselves are, that they do have agency and capacities to affect change. This is something I didn't realize when I was younger. I always thought it was simply beyond my capacity to change what my government thought or what other governments thought. But one of the things I learned is that persistent campaigning can bring about fundamental shifts.

When we started this campaign so many countries told us that a total ban of nuclear weapons is simply unrealistic. We could never have a treaty adopted by the UN. We kept on pushing and pushing and they kept on saying no, no, no. But we got there and two-thirds of the intentional community are behind this treaty and I'm convinced that this is going to have a profound impact, and really put us well on the path to a nuclear free world.

Miki Ebara

Chief International Correspondant/ Executive Producer

Toward a world free of nuclear weapons (2)

July 29, 2018

Japan, other nations must tackle reducing nuclear weapons

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201807290016.html>

By ROY K. AKAGAWA/ AJW Staff Writer

NAGASAKI--At a time of uncertainty as to the relationship between the United States and Russia, other nations, including Japan, as well as private citizens, need to act toward achieving a world without nuclear weapons.

That sentiment was echoed by a number of speakers at an international symposium here on July 28.

This year's International Symposium for Peace, "The Road to Nuclear Weapons Abolition," had the specific theme of "Toward sustainable peace."

Jointly sponsored by the Nagasaki city government, the Nagasaki Foundation for the Promotion of Peace and The Asahi Shimbun, the symposium was held at the Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum Hall.

In his keynote address, Thomas Countryman, chairman of the Arms Control Association, said, "Now is the time to convene a high-level summit approach to help overcome the impasse on nuclear disarmament."

Countryman is a career diplomat who served as assistant secretary of state for international security and nonproliferation under former U.S. President Barack Obama

He explained that not only were the United States and Russia moving away from a decades-long trend to reduce their respective nuclear arsenals, but both Washington and Moscow are also now contemplating new ways of using different nuclear weapons.

Countryman said that any multilateral summit could not depend on leadership from the United States and Russia.

"When the longtime leader of the free world is deliberately stepping away from leadership, the other democratic nations of the world must take up the challenge," he said. "It's up to Japan, to Germany, to Canada, to other nations that still believe in multilateralism to get this effort started."

Much of the discussion that followed among a panel of experts also touched upon the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which was passed by more than 100 members of the United Nations last year. However, not only were the nuclear powers absent from the international conference where that vote took place, but many nations covered under the nuclear umbrella of the United States, such as Japan, also did not take part.

While acknowledging that the ban treaty would not eliminate nuclear weapons overnight, Countryman said it carried a strong message for all those who are concerned about having nuclear weapons in the world.

"It is a strong moral statement," he said. "It is a strong ethical statement. And it is something tangible-- something that can be touched by the hibakusha and by the citizens of Nagasaki and Hiroshima. It is a statement of reality that the risk of nuclear war is carried not just by the nuclear-weapon states but by the entire world. And it is intended to serve as an impulse for further action globally on nuclear disarmament."

Susi Snyder, another speaker, serves as a member of the International Steering Group of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), which won last year's Nobel Peace Prize for its efforts to gain approval of the nuclear weapons ban treaty.

The role of a civil society to push nations to vote for the ban treaty produced some of the humanitarian disarmament factors displayed in the treaty, including new provisions for victim assistance and environmental remediation, Snyder explained.

"It puts the focus on the effect of the weapons and makes it every state's responsibility to deal with the catastrophe that would come if the weapons are ever used again," she said.

She said ICAN would continue to work to establish global norms that could prevent the use of nuclear weapons.

"We will continue with our efforts to stigmatize nuclear weapons," she said. "To build up global public concern that nuclear weapons are unacceptable."

She said that times do change, pointing to the fact that no nation today would boast about possessing or using chemical weapons after some insisted a few decades ago that it constituted a vital part of their military deterrence.

The theme of humanitarian disarmament was also taken up by Motoko Mekata, a professor of NPO policy studies at Chuo University, who talked about her experiences in working with like-minded individuals around the world to win approval for treaties that banned anti-personnel mines and cluster bombs. Those treaties were approved almost a decade apart in 1997 and 2008.

Describing those treaties along with the nuclear weapons ban treaty as arising amid the trend toward humanitarian disarmament efforts, Mekata said, "I believe it was a victory emerging from the ordinary sense held by the average citizen. That sense is one that says mankind cannot co-exist with indiscriminate and inhumane weapons, such as anti-personnel mines, cluster bombs and nuclear weapons. I feel those treaties are the result of ordinary citizens returning back to a natural sense of what it means to be human."

Nobuyasu Abe, a former Foreign Ministry diplomat who also served as U.N. under-secretary-general for disarmament affairs, also criticized the government for working in lockstep with Washington in opposing the nuclear ban treaty last year.

Explaining he could point out what he considered errors on the part of the government because he no longer worked for it, Abe questioned why the government participated in a campaign to pressure non-nuclear weapons nations to not vote for the nuclear weapons ban treaty. He said since such nations would never possess such weapons in any case, they should have been allowed to freely join the treaty.

The importance of utilizing all possible outlets to work toward peace as well as the abolition of nuclear weapons was demonstrated during a special dialogue that began the day's proceedings. Nagasaki Mayor Tomihisa Taue discussed what could be done from his city along with Akira Takata, president of V-Varen Nagasaki, a J.League soccer club that was promoted to the top J1 League for the first time this season. Before acquiring the soccer club, Takata founded a hugely successful TV shopping network known as Japanet Takata Co., and he acquired a wide fan base through his witty sales talk.

Takata explained that he wanted his team's players to not only play with all their might, but to also stress love and peace.

One element displaying the emphasis on peace was the logo on the uniform of the V-Varen Nagasaki team. On the chest is a UNICEF logo and a paper crane silhouette, while Japanet Takata's logo is on the back even though it is the main sponsor of the team. Paper cranes have long been associated with a prayer for peace among the atomic bomb survivors.

Takata also said he was very pleased that promotion to the J1 allowed his team to compete this season for the first time with Sanfrecce Hiroshima.

Citing such clubs as Real Madrid and Barcelona, Takata said, "If there is one thing that even such super clubs would never be able to beat out Nagasaki and Hiroshima, I felt it would be to call for peace."

Meanwhile, Taue explained that he often discusses with city government workers about dealing with the approach of two new but deeply connected trends: the end of the age when hibakusha are still living as well as the start of an age without hibakusha. That meant Nagasaki would have to take up new measures in passing on the experiences of the hibakusha to future generations.

He added that the nuclear weapons ban treaty should serve as an inspiration to citizens who may feel resigned that nothing that they can do as an individual will ever make a difference in bringing about a world without nuclear weapons.

"A large number of small nations did not resign themselves to not being able to do anything in the face of the major powers, but instead worked together to approve the ban treaty," Taue said.

Reinforcing the impression that his ideas about soccer could have only emerged from out-of-the-box thinking, Takata also laid out his own proposal for reducing nuclear weapons.

"If every nation in the world was led by a woman, they would agree to get rid of nuclear weapons," he said.

1945 shirt still contains cesium from black rain



A shirt donated by Toyoko Matsumiya in 2012 to the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum still shows stains from so-called black rain, containing radioactive fallout, that fell on Aug. 6, 1945, after an atomic bomb destroyed the city. | CHUGOKU SHIMBUN

'Black rain' radiation from 1945 Hiroshima A-bombing can still be detected on survivor's shirt: study

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2018/08/06/national/black-rain-radiation-1945-hiroshima-bombing-can-still-detected-survivors-shirt-study/#.W2g7y8IyWos>

by Sakiko Masuda

Chugoku Shimbun

Scientific tests on a shirt worn by a 16-year-old girl who was exposed to rain containing radioactive materials that fell after the Hiroshima atomic bombing on Aug. 6, 1945, known as “black rain,” continue to detect slight amounts of cesium 137 more than 70 years after the attack.

The girl, Toyoko Kubota, washed the shirt for physical education classes a number of times on a washboard, but could not remove the dark stains left after her exposure to the rain. After marriage, she changed her surname to Matsumiya. She is now 89 and lives in Mihara, Hiroshima Prefecture.

At the time of the bombing she was a student at Nishi Girls’ High School, which was closed after the nuclear attack. When the bomb fell she was on the second floor of her school building, which was located in Higashikanon-machi, now part of the city’s Nishi Ward, about 1.3 kilometers from the hypocenter.

The teen was trapped under debris from the building but managed to free herself despite injuries. After that, she was exposed to the black rain near the school. Fatigued and with a high fever and anemia she lay down to rest, but managed to survive.

Kiyoshi Shizuma, 69, a professor emeritus at Hiroshima University and an expert in radiation physics, has been studying the radioactive fallout from the bomb — including the radioactivity of the black rain that was triggered by the bombing.

The storage room at Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum holds many A-bombed artifacts that show traces of the black rain. In 2016, Shizuma received permission from the museum to measure the radiation found on four pieces of A-bombed clothing at Hiroshima University.

In addition to the girl’s shirt, a small amount of cesium-137 was also detected on a sailor-style school uniform, a burned shirt and a loincloth. The items were believed to have been exposed to the black rain in present-day Naka Ward and Nishi Ward.

It is thought the black rain and its radioactive fallout affected a wide area of the city, not only downtown Hiroshima. How far it reached and what impact it had on humans are still debated.

Shizuma later reported his findings from the radiation tests to a study group focused on A-bombed artifacts at the museum. He also shared the results in an article in the group’s journal.

“I would like to uncover the facts that have yet to be clarified, as much as possible,” said Shizuma, whose grandfather was killed in the atomic bombing. The professor’s father was also exposed to radiation as he entered the city center shortly after the attack.

This monthly feature focuses on topics and issues covered by the Chugoku Shimbun, the largest newspaper in the Chugoku region. The original article was published on June 25.

Tapes from crew of Enola Gay bomber



The crew of the B-29 bomber "Enola Gay," which dropped an atomic bomb on Hiroshima, poses for a picture. Pilot Paul Tibbets is third from right in the back row. (Photo courtesy of Ari M. Beser)

August 4, 2018

Interview tapes of American airmen who dropped A-bomb on Hiroshima found

<https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20180804/p2a/00m/0na/008000c>

The crew of the B-29 bomber "Enola Gay," which dropped an atomic bomb on Hiroshima, poses for a picture. Pilot Paul Tibbets is third from right in the back row. (Photo courtesy of Ari M. Beser)

HIROSHIMA -- Interview tapes and their transcripts of American airmen who dropped an atomic bomb on Hiroshima on Aug. 6, 1945 have been discovered and donated to the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum, the Mainichi Shimbun has learned.

- **【Related】** 20% of A-bomb disease reauthorization turned down by local governments
- **【Related】** Hiroshima Atomic-Bombing Archives (Part 1)
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According to a transcript of the recordings, Paul Tibbets, the pilot of the B-29 bomber "Enola Gay," told the interviewer that the Hiroshima mission was secret and that the crew was carrying cyanide tablets for killing themselves if needed. The pilot said that he tasted lead in his mouth the moment the bomb detonated, and felt a "big relief."

Museum officials say the existence of those tapes and transcripts had never before been confirmed, adding that they are important as they depict in detail the situation inside the bomber and the psychological state of the crew.

The records include 27 tapes spanning about 30 hours, and 570 pages of transcripts. They were donated to the museum in June last year by the bereaved family of a Japanese person who had owned them. A memo left with the items suggests that they are copies of records made for the 1977 book "Enola Gay: Mission to Hiroshima" written by British authors Gordon Thomas and Max Morgan-Witts.

The tapes contain voices of five people, including Tibbets and Thomas Ferebee, the bombardier who pushed the button to drop the atomic bomb on Hiroshima. A memoir written by Jacob Beser, who was

aboard both the Enola Gay and the Bockscar, the B-29 that dropped an atomic bomb on Nagasaki on Aug. 9, 1945, was also included.

According to the donated records, the interviewer asked in detail how the bomb was dropped on Hiroshima. When asked why the crew members carried handguns, Tibbets explained that they were for protection, and revealed that they had cyanide tablets, too, to kill themselves to avoid capture by the Imperial Japanese Army in case the aircraft crashed. This indicates that the atomic bombing of Hiroshima was indeed a highly confidential mission.

The Enola Gay took off from a U.S. base on Tinian Island in the Pacific in the early hours of Aug. 6, 1945 and made its way to the target -- the T-shaped Aioi Bridge in the Hiroshima city center. The "Little Boy" uranium bomb detonated at 8:15 a.m. Tibbets is quoted as saying in the records that at the moment of the explosion, "I got the brilliance, I tasted it. Yeh, I could taste it. It tasted like lead. And this was because of the fillings in my teeth. So that's radiation, see. So I got this lead taste in my mouth and that was a big relief -- I knew she had blown."

After dropping the bomb, the Enola Gay made a rapid evasive right turn but the shockwaves hit the fuselage, according to Tibbets. "If you can imagine yourself inside a tin building and somebody comes along on the outside and hits it with a hammer, you get the sound effect," he recalled. The pilot also said he saw the mushroom cloud from the bomb through the aircraft's window.

The museum is considering releasing the audio tapes and having experts analyze the recordings after getting approval from the people concerned. Museum curator Ryo Koyama said, "The records contain vivid testimonies by each and every crew member (of the Enola Gay) and has historic value."

(Japanese original by Shun Teraoka, Hiroshima Bureau and Akira Okubo, Osaka City News Department)

August 6 - Hiroshima remembered

August 6, 2018

<https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/nhknewslines/backstories/hiroshimaremembered/>

Hope after the horror revealed in letters from postwar Hiroshima

Patrons recall Hiroshima beer hall that survived A-bombing to bring relief to survivors

Mayor urges easing of regional tensions as Hiroshima marks 73rd anniversary of U.S. atomic bombing

Grandchildren of hibakusha and B-29 crewman unite to press for nuclear-free world

Hibakusha, Hiroshima mayor want Japan to do more

August 6, 2018

Hibakusha demand Japan sign nuclear ban treaty

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20180806_34/

Atomic bomb survivors' groups in Japan have urged Prime Minister Shinzo Abe to sign and ratify the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, noting that Japan is the only country that has experienced atomic bombings.

Representatives of 7 survivors' groups met with Abe after attending the Peace Memorial Ceremony in Hiroshima on Monday, the anniversary of the US atomic bombing of the city in 1945.

The groups maintained that against the backdrop of summit talks between the United States and North Korea, the world is at a turning point. They asked Abe to sign and ratify the treaty to see that the world will take steps to eliminate nuclear weapons.

Abe replied that he shares the goal of eliminating nuclear weapons from the world. He said Japan will engage with the international community to urge that both nuclear and non-nuclear states take part.

Following his meeting with Abe, the head of the atomic bomb survivors' group in Hiroshima Prefecture, Sunao Tsuboi, said he will continue to make the case that nuclear weapons, which were created by mankind, must be eliminated by mankind.

The head of another survivors' group in Hiroshima, Kunihiro Sakuma, said he felt the way that the prime minister referred to the treaty showed he had not given it much thought. He added that his group will ask next year that Japan sign and ratify the treaty.

Earlier on Monday, Abe reiterated Japan's position that it will not join the nuclear ban treaty because its approach is different from the Japanese government's.

Hiroshima mayor questions nuclear nations' nationalism, wants Japan to do more

<https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20180806/p2a/00m/0na/016000c>

HIROSHIMA -- Hiroshima Mayor Kazumi Matsui told a ceremony marking the 73rd anniversary of the atomic bombing of the western Japan city here that some countries are "blatantly proclaiming self-centered nationalism and modernizing their nuclear arsenals," and asked the government of Japan to play a "proper role" in leading the world toward the entry into force of the United Nations treaty banning nuclear weapons.

- **【Related】** Full text of Hiroshima Peace Declaration on 73rd A-bomb anniversary
- **【Related】** Text of UN chief's message to memorial ceremony on A-bomb anniv.
- **【Related】** Photos showing Hiroshima a few months after atomic bombing found in Hawaii
- **【Related】** Text of Commitment to Peace by Hiroshima children on 73rd anniv. of atomic bombing

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, however, did not refer to the treaty in his speech to the ceremony, repeating the posture he took in last year's event held shortly after the treaty was adopted at the United Nations headquarters in July 2017. Japan is not supporting the international accord banning the production, possession and use of nuclear arms among its signatories. In his speech this year, Abe said Japan will "make strenuous efforts to serve as a bridge between nuclear powers and non-nuclear states."

Some 50,000 people attended the ceremony on Aug. 6, including hibakusha, or survivors of the atomic bombing, people who lost their loved ones to the U.S. attack in 1945, and ambassadors and representatives from 85 countries worldwide as well as the European Union. The international representation was the third largest on record.

Among five major nuclear weapons states, representatives from the United States, France, Russia and Britain took part in the event. China did not send its emissary. U.S. Ambassador to Japan William F. Hagerty IV made his first appearance at the ceremony since he was sworn in for the current post in July of last year.

All participants observed one minute of silence from 8:15 a.m., the time the Little Boy uranium bomb was dropped and detonated over Hiroshima on Aug. 6, 1945, killing some 140,000 people by the end of that year.

During the ceremony, Matsui started his "peace declaration" with these words: "It's 73 years ago and a Monday morning, just like today. With the mid-summer sun already blazing, Hiroshima starts another day. Please listen to what I say next as if you and your loved ones were there."

Matsui said the number of hibakusha alive today is decreasing, and therefore "listening to them grows ever more crucial." The mayor then touched on the winning of last year's Nobel Peace Prize by the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), a worldwide network of nongovernmental organizations that pushed for the adoption of the nuclear weapons ban treaty, and said the spirit of the hibakusha "is spreading through the world."

Matsui also expressed hope for the easing of tensions on the Korean Peninsula to proceed through "peaceable dialogue," as the U.S. and North Korea reached an agreement to denuclearize the peninsula in their summit in June.

On the other hand, the mayor pointed out, in an apparent reference to the U.S. administration of President Donald Trump and other world powers that, "certain countries are blatantly proclaiming self-centered nationalism and modernizing their nuclear arsenals, rekindling tensions that had eased with the end of the Cold War." Matsui criticized nuclear deterrence and nuclear umbrellas as flaunting "the destructive power of nuclear weapons and seeking to maintain international order by generating fear in rival countries" and urged world leaders to use reason and insight to abolish nuclear weapons.

The Hiroshima mayor regarded the nuclear weapons ban treaty as "a milestone along the path to a nuclear-weapon-free world," urging the government of Japan to play a role to help bring it into force. There was no expression in the mayor's speech directly asking Tokyo to sign or ratify the treaty, which requires ratification by at least 50 signatories to come into force but has been ratified by just 14 countries and regions.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Abe said in his speech, "It is the duty of Japan, as the only country to have been hit with atomic bombs in wartime, to work tirelessly in pursuit of a world without nuclear weapons." But he emphasized that differences are emerging among countries on how to proceed with nuclear disarmament, and stated that Japan, under the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty, will "serve as a bridge between nuclear powers and non-nuclear states and lead international efforts."

The United Nations secretary-general urged in his speech delivered by Izumi Nakamitsu, high representative for disarmament affairs, that hibakusha continue to exert their "moral leadership" for the world to seek the abolition of nuclear arms.

Mayor Matsui and representatives of bereaved families of atomic bomb victims placed new lists of 5,393 victims whose deaths were confirmed over the past year, making the total number of atomic bomb victims at 314,118, covered in 115 volumes of the lists. Those holding hibakusha certificates numbered 154,859 as of March this year, the lowest on record, while their average age stood at 82.06.

(Japanese original by Azusa Takayama, Hiroshima Bureau)

Grassroot effort needed to change one-sided approach

August 6, 2018

ICAN champions grass-roots efforts to persuade Japan and others to support a nuclear-free world

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2018/08/06/national/ican-champions-grass-roots-efforts-persuade-japan-others-support-nuclear-free-world/#.W2g8bslyWos>

by Patrick Parr

Contributing Writer

ICAN, the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, has made significant progress in the last year, but according to core member Akira Kawasaki the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize winning coalition is just getting started.

ICAN, based in Geneva and launched in 2007, now has around 450 partner organizations in nearly a hundred countries. The process of building itself into a force for peace has had its challenges, but on July 7 last year, this “grass-roots civil society coalition” took one big step toward its mission of “worldwide nuclear disarmament,” Kawasaki said in an interview. On that day in New York, after years of persuading other countries to support the endeavor, ICAN worked with the United Nations and passed the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, initially supported by over 135 countries.

In order for the treaty to become international law, however, it must be signed and ratified by at least 50 nation-states. So far, 60 nations have signed the treaty but only 14 have officially integrated the treaty into their constitution. None of the world nuclear powers have joined and neither has Japan, which relies on the U.S. nuclear umbrella.

Millions will recognize the 73rd anniversary on Monday of that horrific morning in Hiroshima. Public support for the treaty is strong in Japan, with over half of the municipalities pledging their support. The Japanese government, however, has decided to take a passive stance on the matter, stating that “since no nuclear weapon states are involved, the treaty is not practical ... (instead) Japan will bridge the divide.” Kawasaki disagrees. “The uniqueness of the treaty was that it prohibited nuclear weapons on humanitarian grounds.” Since Japan is the only country in the world to have experienced the inhumane nature of nuclear weapons on its own soil, “Japan should take the lead in advancing this humanitarian discourse,” he said. By not signing the treaty, Kawasaki believes the government is “undermining the credibility of Japan as a nation.”

According to Kawasaki, it is only a matter of time until ICAN’s treaty achieves the 50-nation requirement. Ninety days after that final nation-state signature, the treaty will officially replace the Cold War-negotiated 1968 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). The irony of the name is not lost on Kawasaki, since the half-century-old agreement actually “perpetuated” the proliferation of nuclear weapons and caused nations such as India, Pakistan and North Korea to go rogue — or, in Kawasaki’s words, “mirror” the behavior of the United States and Russia — and set up their own nuclear weapons programs.

Once ICAN’s treaty becomes international law, the pressure will then shift to countries such as the U.S. and Russia. “In the past,” Kawasaki says, “nuclear weapons were a symbol of power. But now, with a treaty that rejects compromise, nuclear weapons will be a symbol of shame.” Economic sanctions can be enforced, and banks could begin a divestment process similar to what occurred after the Convention on Cluster Munitions Treaty was put into effect in 2008. Kawasaki also mentions the “Don’t Bank on the Bomb” campaign, and says that since the signing of the treaty, “as many as 30 banks ceased to invest in nuclear weapons producers.”

As of Sunday, ICAN had secured the ratification of their treaty from Mexico and Austria — the 15th- and 28th-ranked GDP economies in the world, respectively — and Brazil, which is ranked ninth, has also signed to indicate its support. In order for the treaty to gain any traction as far as future sanctions are concerned, ICAN is going to need the help of countries such as Japan, the third-largest economy, if they are to continue to have success.

In order for the Japanese government to change its stance, Kawasaki believes several factors will need to be addressed — the first being the continued nuclear disarmament of North Korea. “If both North and South Korea join the treaty, the North will feel obliged to disarm, and the South will be bound by law not to deploy, keep or assist U.S.-related nuclear weapons.” While Kawasaki welcomes the recent peace talks between President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un in Singapore, he said “international law will bind the country to their commitment.”

Kawasaki urges anyone who lives in a country that has not signed the treaty to spread the word and become involved in their local city councils. In Japan, especially, it will take a grass-roots effort to change what some see as a one-sided government approach. “A vast majority of Japanese people believe they are victims,” Kawasaki says, “and we are calling for a nuclear-free world. But when you look at the behavior of the government ... it shows that they are considering the issue only superficially.”

Nagasaki Peace Declaration

August 9, 2018

Full text of Nagasaki Peace Declaration

https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20180809/p2g/00m/0dm/050000c#cxrecs_s

August 9, 2018 (Mainichi Japan)

It was on this day 73 years ago, at 11:02 a.m. on August 9. The explosion of a single atomic bomb in the blue summer sky reduced the city of Nagasaki to a horrific state. Humans, animals, plants, trees and all other forms of life were scorched to ashes. Countless corpses lay scattered all around the annihilated streets. The corpses of people who had exhausted themselves searching for water bobbed up and down in the rivers, drifting until they reached the estuaries. 150,000 people were killed or wounded and those who somehow managed to survive suffered severe mental and physical wounds. To this day they continue to be afflicted by the aftereffects of radiation exposure.

- **【Related】** Full text of Hiroshima Peace Declaration on 73rd A-bomb anniversary

Atomic bombs are cruel weapons that mercilessly take away from humans the dignity to live in a humane manner.

In 1946, the newly-founded United Nations made the elimination of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction the first resolution of its General Assembly. The Constitution of Japan, which was issued that same year, set pacifism as one of its unwavering pillars. These were strong expressions of determination to see that the tragedy of the atomic bombings experienced by Hiroshima and Nagasaki, along with the war that brought them on, would never be repeated. The fulfillment of this resolve was then entrusted to the future.

Continuous efforts to realize this resolve made by countries and individuals, most prominently the atomic bombing survivors, bore fruit last year when the United Nations adopted the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. Furthermore, the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (also known as ICAN), which greatly contributed to efforts that led to the adoption of this treaty, was then awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. These two developments are proof that the majority of people on this earth continue to seek the realization of a world free of nuclear weapons.

Even now, however, 73 years after the end of World War II, some 14,450 nuclear warheads exist in the world. Moreover, to the great concern of those in the atomic-bombed cities, a shift towards openly

asserting that nuclear weapons are necessary and that their use could lead to increased military might is once again on the rise.

I hereby appeal to the leaders of nuclear-armed nations and nations dependent on the nuclear umbrella. Please do not forget the resolve of the first United Nations General Assembly Resolution to work towards the elimination of nuclear weapons. In addition, please fulfill the pledge made to the world 50 years ago in the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (or NPT) to pursue nuclear disarmament in good faith. I strongly request that you change to security policies not dependent on nuclear weapons before humanity once again commits a mistake that would create even more atomic bombing victims. To the people of the world, please demand that the governments and parliaments in your countries sign and ratify the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in order to see that this treaty comes into effect at the earliest possible date.

The Government of Japan has taken the position of not signing the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. In response to this, more than 300 local assemblies have voiced their desire to see this treaty signed and ratified. I hereby ask that the Government of Japan, the only country to have suffered from the wartime use of nuclear weapons, support the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and fulfill its moral obligation to lead the world towards denuclearization.

Currently, a new movement towards peace and denuclearization on the Korean Peninsula has emerged. We in the atomic-bombed cities watch this development attentively and have great expectations that persistent diplomatic efforts, as initiated with the Panmunjom Declaration by the leaders of North and South Korea and the first ever United States-North Korea Summit, will lead to the realization of irreversible denuclearization. I hope that the Japanese government will make use of this great opportunity to work towards the realization of a Northeast Asia Nuclear-Weapons-Free Zone that would see Japan and the entire Korean Peninsula denuclearized.

Last year, two of the hibakusha, or atomic bombing survivors, who led the anti-nuclear-weapons movement in Nagasaki for many years passed away in quick succession. One was Mr. Hideo Tsuchiyama, who had this to say about the leaders of countries that rely on nuclear weapons. "Your possession of nuclear weapons, or attempts to possess such weapons, is nothing to boast of. Rather, you should know that it is something shameful that risks making you perpetrators of crimes against humanity." The second of these hibakusha, Mr. Sumiteru Taniguchi, spoke the following words. "Human beings and nuclear weapons cannot co-exist. The suffering we went through is more than enough. For people to truly live as human beings, we cannot allow a single nuclear weapon to remain on the face of the earth." These two people harbored great worries that those who have never experienced war or atomic bombings might head down mistaken paths. With their passing, I feel anew the need to pass on to the next generation the war-renouncing message included in the Constitution of Japan.

There are many things that each and every one of us can do to help bring about the realization of a peaceful world. One is to visit the atomic-bombed cities in order to learn about history and the fearfulness of nuclear weapons. It is also important to listen to accounts of the wartime experiences of those in your own towns. While the experiences themselves are not things that can be shared, feelings of appreciation for peace may be shared by all. The campaign to collect ten-thousand signatures in support of the abolition of nuclear weapons, a project that originated in Nagasaki, started with a proposal made by high school students. The ideas and actions of the young generation have the power to create new movements. There are also people who continue to fold paper cranes and send them to the atomic-bombed cities. Through exchanges between people from different cultures and traditions we deepen our mutual understanding, which in turn can lead to peace. We can also make expressions of peace through our

favorite music or sport. The foundations of peace are most certainly formed in civil society. Let us use the power of the civil society to spread throughout the world a culture of peace instead of one of war. Seven years have now passed since the nuclear power plant accident that followed the Great East Japan Earthquake, yet the people of Fukushima are still suffering from the effects of radiation. Nagasaki continues to offer support to all those in Fukushima who are persevering with efforts aimed at rebuilding. The average age of the hibakusha is now over 82. I ask that the Government of Japan improve efforts to provide support for survivors still suffering from the aftereffects of the bombings, and offer relief as soon as possible for those who experienced the bombings but have yet to receive official recognition as such. While offering our heartfelt condolences to those who lost their lives in the atomic bombings, we citizens of Nagasaki hereby declare that we will continue to work tirelessly with people around the world to bring about everlasting peace and the realization of a world free of nuclear weapons.

Tomihisa Taue

Mayor of Nagasaki

See also : Nagasaki mayor calls for Japan to join U.N. nuclear weapons treaty

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201808090048.html>

Nagasaki mayor Taue urges Japan not to depend on nuclear arms

August 9, 2018

Nagasaki mayor calls for security policy independent of nuclear weapons

<https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20180809/p2a/00m/0na/017000c>

NAGASAKI -- Mayor Tomihisa Taue told a ceremony commemorating the 73rd bombing of this southern Japan city on Aug. 9, 1945, by the United States that nuclear weapons states and countries dependent on "nuclear umbrellas" should turn to national security policies not dependent on nuclear weapons.

- **【Related】** Full text of Nagasaki Peace Declaration
- **【Related】** Text of message by UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres at Nagasaki Peace Memorial Ceremon
- **【Related】** Hiroshima mayor questions nuclear nations' nationalism, wants Japan to do more

The mayor also urged Tokyo to support the United Nation's Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons as the only country that suffered atomic bombings, and fulfill its ethical responsibility of leading the world toward the elimination of nuclear arms.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe did not mention the treaty in his speech at the Aug. 9 ceremony, just as he made no reference to it at a similar memorial marking the 73rd anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima.

The Nagasaki ceremony was attended by some 5,800 hibakusha, or survivors of atomic bombings, and the family members of those killed by the American attacks, observing a minute of silence from 11:02 a.m. when the "Fat Man" plutonium bomb exploded above the city, killing at least 74,000 people by the end of 1945.

Participants also included U.N. Secretary General Antonio Guterres, who became the first chief of the world body to attend the Nagasaki ceremony, and representatives from 71 countries, including the five

recognized nuclear weapons states -- the U.S., Russia, China, Britain and France, which are permitted to possess the arms under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Mayor Taue said in his peace declaration, "I strongly request that you change to security policies not dependent on nuclear weapons before humanity once again commits a mistake that would create even more atomic bombing victims." He also urged people around the world to request their respective governments to sign the nuclear weapons ban treaty.

The mayor touched on the June 12 summit between U.S. President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, and expressed his hope that diplomacy "will lead to the realization of the irreversible denuclearization" of the Korean Peninsula as agreed upon by the two leaders.

Calling for the abolition of nuclear weapons, Taue quoted the words of two leading hibakusha who passed away over the last year -- former Nagasaki University President Hideo Tsuchiyama, who died at age 92, and Sumiteru Taniguchi, senior member of the Japan Confederation of A- and H-Bomb Sufferers Organizations, who died at age 88.

"Human beings and nuclear weapons cannot co-exist. The suffering we went through is more than enough. For people to truly live as human beings, we cannot allow a single nuclear weapon to remain on the face of the Earth," Taniguchi was quoted as saying by Taue. The mayor then emphasized the need to pass on the war-renouncing Constitution to the next generation.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Abe told the memorial that the government will firmly maintain the three non-nuclear principles that obligate Japan not to produce, possess, or allow transport into the country of nuclear weapons. The premier said Tokyo will try to serve as a bridge between nuclear and non-nuclear states, and lead international efforts to abolish nuclear arms.

U.N. Secretary General Guterres said that the total elimination of nuclear weapons "remains the highest disarmament priority of the United Nations."

Representing hibakusha, Terumi Tanaka, 86, a senior member of the Japan Confederation of A- and H-Bomb Sufferers Organizations, criticized the stance of the Japanese government opposing the nuclear weapons ban treaty as "extremely regrettable." Tanaka declared that he will do his best to create a world without nuclear weapons or wars.

The Aug. 9 ceremony included the dedication of a new list of 3,511 people who passed away during the past year after suffering from the atomic bombing 73 years ago. The number included 68 people who are not officially recognized by the central government as hibakusha because they were located outside the designated areas of radiation exposure. The total number of people who died as a result of the atomic bombing of Nagasaki now stands at 179,226.

(Japanese original by Yoshihito Asano, Nagasaki Bureau)

Virtual reality experience of Hiroshima bombing

August 6, 2018

Japanese students use VR to recreate moments A-bomb fell on Hiroshima

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201808060060.html>

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

FUKUYAMA, Hiroshima Prefecture--It's a sunny summer morning in the city of Hiroshima. Cicadas chirp in the trees. A lone plane flies high overhead. Then a flash of light, followed by a loud blast. Buildings are flattened and smoke rises from crackling fires under a darkened sky.

Over two years, a group of Japanese high school students has been painstakingly producing a five-minute virtual reality experience that recreates the sights and sounds of Hiroshima before, during and after the United States dropped an atomic bomb on the city 73 years ago Monday.

By transporting users back in time to the moment when a city was turned into a wasteland, the students and their teacher hope to ensure that something similar never happens again.

The Aug. 6, 1945, bombing of Hiroshima killed 140,000 people. Three days later, a second U.S. atomic bomb killed 70,000 people in Nagasaki. Japan surrendered six days after that, ending World War II.

"Even without language, once you see the images, you understand," said Mei Okada, one of the students working on the project at a technical high school in Fukuyama, a city about 100 kilometers east of Hiroshima. "That is definitely one of the merits of this VR experience."

Wearing virtual reality headsets, users can take a walk along the Motoyasu River prior to the blast and see the businesses and buildings that once stood there. They can enter the post office and the Shima Hospital courtyard, where the skeletal remains of a building now known as the Atomic Bomb Dome stand on the river's banks, a testament to what happened.

The students, who belong to the computation skill research club at Fukuyama Technical High School, were born more than half a century after the bombing. Yuhi Nakagawa, 18, said he initially didn't have much interest in what happened when the bombs were dropped; if anything, it was a topic he had avoided.

"When I was creating the buildings before the atomic bomb fell and after, I saw many photos of buildings that were gone. I really felt how scary atomic bombs can be," he said. "So while creating this scenery, I felt it was really important to share this with others."

To recreate Hiroshima, the students studied old photographs and postcards and interviewed survivors of the bombing to hear their experiences and get their feedback on the VR footage. They used computer graphics software to add further details such as lighting and the natural wear and tear on building surfaces.

"Those who knew the city very well tell us it's done very well. They say it's very nostalgic," said Katsushi Hasegawa, a computer teacher who supervises the club. "Sometimes they start to reminisce about their memories from that time, and it really makes me glad that we created this."

The students are working through summer vacation in a classroom without air conditioning, as temperatures reach 35 degrees. With the survivors aging, Hasegawa said, it's a race against time.

Did bombing Hiroshima and Nagasaki save lives?



Did bombing Hiroshima and Nagasaki save lives?

<https://beyondnuclearinternational.org/2018/08/13/did-bombing-hiroshima-and-nagasaki-save-lives/>

Posted on August 13, 2018 by beyondnuclearinternational

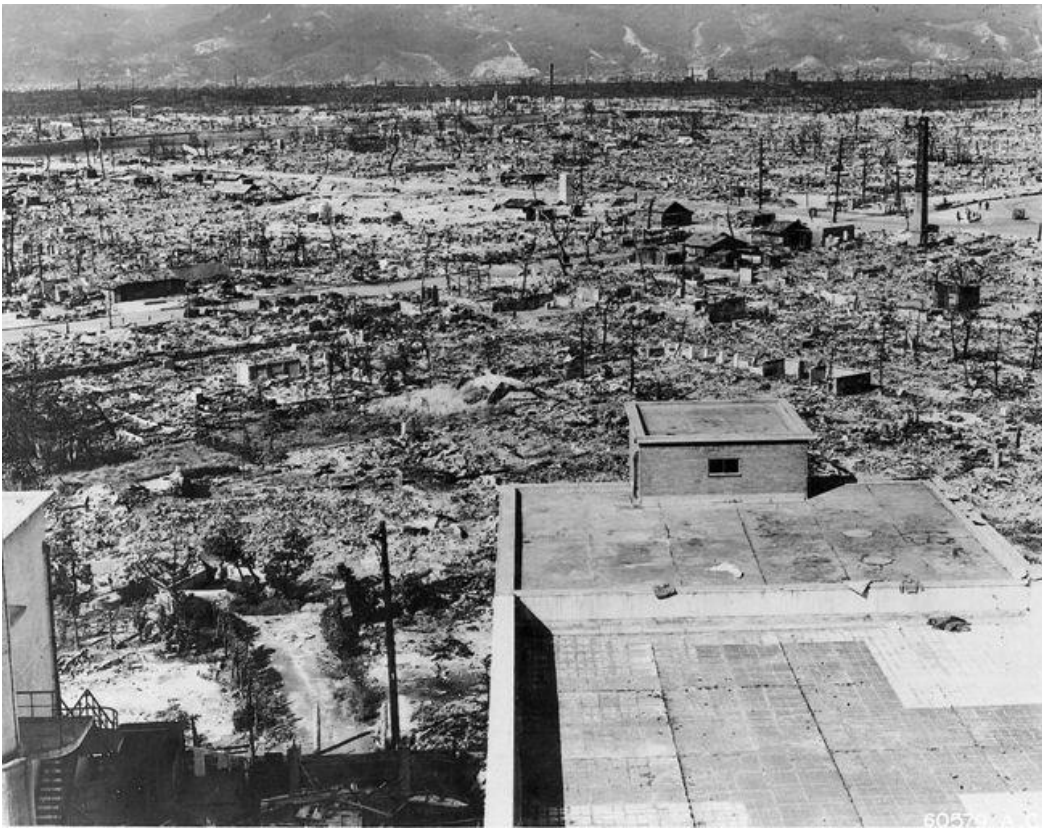
The question goes to the heart of the debate about the utility of nuclear weapons and the rationale for keeping them

By Ward Wilson

Zachary Keck makes an able case that the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki saved lives. He argues two main points: that Japan would not have surrendered immediately without the shock of the bomb (the Soviet declaration of war was not enough), and secondly that the limited use of nuclear weapons during World War II created a taboo that prevented a larger use during the Cold War. Both of these arguments are plausible but, I think, wrong. This is not just a question of 70 year-old history. This goes to the heart of the debate about the utility of nuclear weapons and the rationale for keeping them. These are arguments, in other words, that matter.

Apples and Oranges

First, a preliminary point that is not essential, but is still worth mentioning. It is certainly true that many more people would have died had the Allies launched a full-scale invasion of Japan. Japan's soldiers often fought fanatically. After all, out of 31,000 Japanese soldiers stationed on Saipan, only 921 were taken prisoner after the fighting there. But there is an important distinction that gets overlooked when you compare people killed at Hiroshima and Nagasaki with people killed in an invasion of Japan. The casualties in an invasion of Japan would have been largely soldiers, the people killed at Hiroshima and Nagasaki were almost all civilians.



The Hiroshima bombing killed mostly civilians, not military personnel, an important distinction. (Photo: WikiCommons)

The distinction between those who fight for their country, and those who do not fight is one of the most important in war. Killing civilians isn't morally equivalent to killing soldiers and comparisons like Keck's have to be thrown out on moral grounds even before other things are considered. Of course, I have seen attempts to make the same point by arguing that killing 200,000 civilians at Hiroshima and Nagasaki prevented the deaths of many more civilians who were dying as a result of harsh Japanese rule in the occupied territories in China, Burma, Philippines, and the rest. In other words comparing civilian lives taken for civilian lives saved. This is a more morally plausible argument. But it also depends, as Keck's argument depends, on the assumption that bombing Hiroshima mattered.

Bombing Hiroshima and Nagasaki Didn't Win the War

I am largely uninterested in whether people think the United States was morally wrong to bomb Hiroshima and Nagasaki. I do not subscribe to the arguments of "revisionist" historians who argue that the Japanese were going to surrender anyway. I am interested in whether nuclear weapons *work*. Not whether they explode with great force, but the more crucial question of whether they create shock in the minds of adversaries that forces them to surrender or causes them to be deterred. That is the central tenet of nuclear deterrence theory and therefore one of the most important questions of current military debate today, far more important than whether the United States did wrong or right 69 years ago.



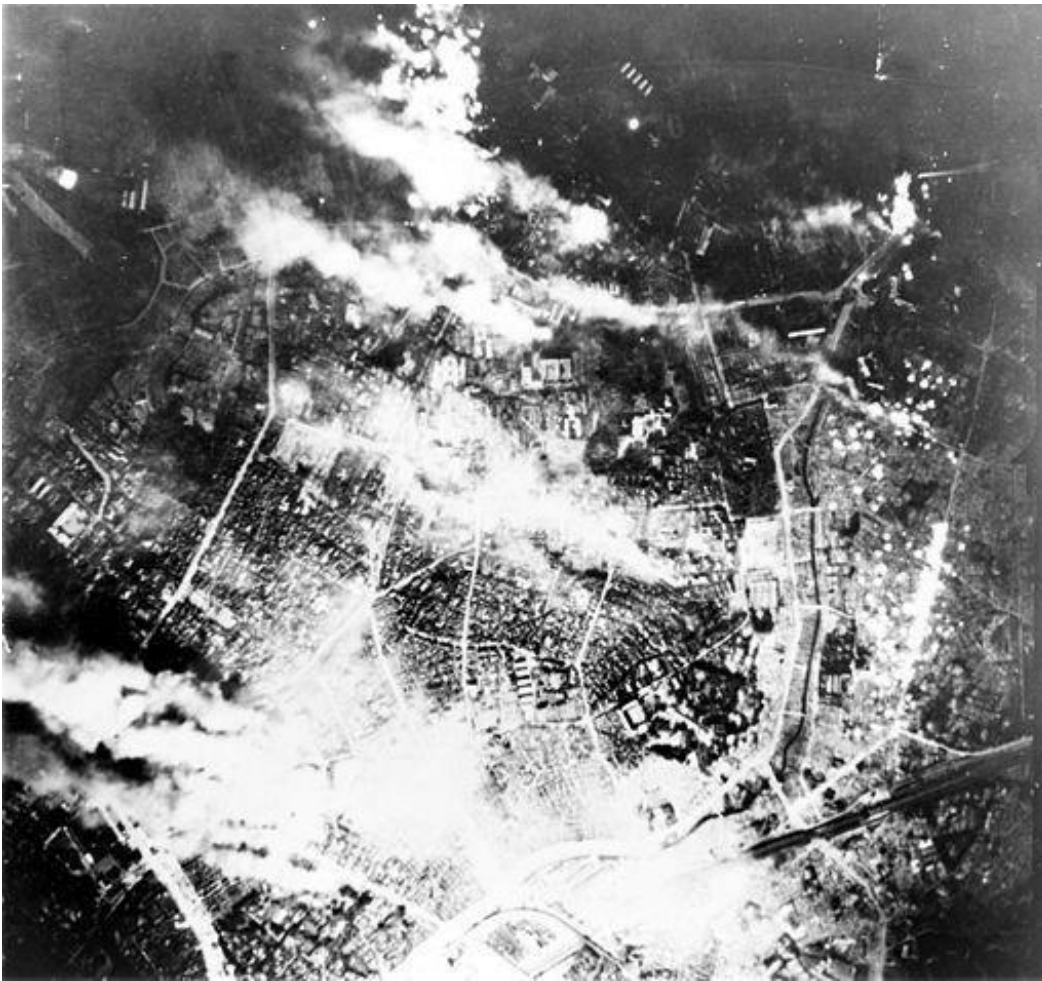
Minister of War, Korechika Anami, did not see the Hiroshima bombing as more menacing than the Tokyo fire bombings. (Photo: WikiCommons)

Bombing Hiroshima didn't win the war because bombing Hiroshima didn't matter to Japan's military leaders. It was a horrifying act of enormous destruction. But they weren't impressed. Deputy Chief of Staff of the Army Toroshiro Kawabe wrote in his diary two days after Hiroshima that when he learned it was a nuclear weapon it gave him a "serious jolt." But, he continued, "we must be tenacious and fight on." Minister of War Korechika Anami (and probably the most powerful man in the government – more powerful even than the emperor) said on August 12 that the atomic bombings were "no more menacing" than the fire bombings Japan had been experiencing all summer long. These sentiments may seem surprising to us, but they make sense in the context of the ferocious bombing campaign Japan had already undergone.

The United States bombed 68 cities in the summer of 1945. If you graph the number of people immediately killed in those 68 attacks, Hiroshima is not the attack that killed most. It is second, behind Tokyo, an attack using conventional bombs. If you graph the number of square miles destroyed, Hiroshima is sixth. If you graph the percentage of the city destroyed, Hiroshima is 17th. The attack on Hiroshima was not that different from other attacks. The means were different. But the ends were much the same.

After Hiroshima was bombed, Japan's soldiers dug in on the beaches waiting for the U.S. invasion. They were still ready to fight. There was one fewer city behind them, but they had been losing cities every other day, on average, throughout the entire summer. One city more or less didn't make that much difference to them. And the "rain of ruin" that Truman threatened in his announcement that it was a nuclear weapon that destroyed Hiroshima was an empty threat. There was hardly anything left to bomb. After Nagasaki had been bombed (and with Kyoto removed from the list by Stimson and three of the other cities being out of range on Hokkaido) only five major cities remained un-bombed. The destruction of the air campaign had been so thorough, there was little left to destroy.

There is considerably more evidence that could be cited. Senior officers in the Army considered launching a coup and capturing the Emperor after the Soviet declaration of war. No such drastic measures were discussed after Hiroshima was bombed. Examined closely, the contemporary factual record shows little evidence that any of Japan's leaders were "shocked" or considered the bombing of Hiroshima decisive. After the war, most officers and former government officials followed the emperor's lead in blaming defeat on the Bomb. It was, after all, the perfect explanation for losing the war. Who could blame Japan's military for losing to a "miracle" weapon? But at the time they don't seem to have been impressed.



More people died during the firebombing of Tokyo (pictured) than due to atomic bombing of Hiroshima. (Photo: WikiCommons)

Read the diary entry of Admiral Sokichi Takagi talking to Admiral Mitsumasa Yonai on August 8 – keeping in mind that the next day would be filled with emergency meetings that would result in a decision to surrender – and try to convince yourself that these are men on the brink of surrender. They are not overwhelmed with emotion. They don't seem shocked. They don't say, "The end is almost near." "Now there is no way to go on." "I am filled with regret for the many mistakes we made." No. They're joking about Premier Kantaro Suzuki's lack of influence. They're wondering when they'll hear from Stalin (Japan wants him to mediate an end to the conflict). They're assessing who stands where in the government and who needs to get some "straight talk" from whom. Try to convince yourself that these are leaders who have been shocked so badly that they will surrender the next day. You can't. It is only after midnight, after the Soviet Union declares war, that they begin to act like men in crisis.

The bombing of Hiroshima just didn't create the kind of strategic impact that coerces experienced military men during wartime. By comparison, the declaration of war by the Soviet Union had enormous strategic importance. Adding another great power to a war will tend to do that. Bombing Hiroshima and Nagasaki had little impact on the decision making of Japan's leaders. It couldn't, therefore, have "saved lives."

Limited Use in WWII Prevented Larger Use Later

Finally, there is the argument that the horror of Hiroshima and Nagasaki created a taboo that prevented nuclear war during the Cold War.

If killing 200,000 civilians kept World War III from happening, well, maybe that's a worthwhile trade off. But we're not yet in a position to judge such a trade off. Because World War III is still possible. Nuclear weapons are not a quaint relic of a largely forgotten time of danger (the Cold War), they are a very present reality that we complacently ignore at our peril. And signs of increasing madness and disorder in the world make complacency seem all the more foolish. Radical Islamists capture large chunks of Syria and Iraq with lightning speed, Russia emerges as a potent threat to Ukrainian sovereignty, and innumerable crises flare up around the globe.

Keck's piece praising all the lives that the bombings saved would make ironic reading for someone in the not too distant future (someone living in the Southern Hemisphere, presumably) if 300 million had just been killed in an all-out nuclear war. It is too soon to decide that we have definitively escaped this danger. When you argue that bombing Hiroshima won World War II, you make nuclear weapons more important. The reputation of nuclear weapons was made by Hiroshima. They became important – the “winning weapon” – because of Hiroshima. The United States and Russia built huge arsenals of the weapons (arsenals that are still substantial today) in part because of Hiroshima. The claim that nuclear weapons won the war is the foundation myth of nuclear weapons. It establishes their quasi-magic ability to coerce and deter which grows into the theory of nuclear deterrence in the 1950s. U.S. alliances are based on nuclear weapons (like NATO and the alliances with Japan and South Korea) because of the reputation that grew out of belief in the shock value of Hiroshima. You could argue that the situation we are in today – large and dangerous arsenals that we seem to perennially have difficulty getting rid of – is in part the result of believing in the shock value of Hiroshima.

So it is important to think carefully and soberly about these events. How we see the end of World War II affects the way we see nuclear weapons, and nuclear weapons remain potentially the source of the swiftest, most complete devastation the human race faces.

Ward Wilson is a Senior Fellow at BASIC and the author of Five Myths About Nuclear Weapons, available from Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.

Headline photo of Hiroshima peace memorial by José María Mateos for Creative Commons/Flickr.

This article first appeared in The Diplomat on August 25, 2014 and is reproduced with permission.

Abe doesn't speak the same language as peace seekers

August 10, 2018

EDITORIAL: Abe should keep pledge to lead on elimination of nuclear weapons

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201808100022.html>

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, representative of the government of Japan, and atomic bomb survivors, witnesses to the horrific scenes of 1945, appeared to have little language in common.

That unfortunate scene, almost too painful to bear, was repeated again this summer.

During the peace memorial ceremonies to mark the 73rd anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the mayors of the two cities and a representative of atomic bomb survivors all expressed their positive hopes for the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and called on Tokyo to take serious action.

But Abe did not even mention the treaty during his speeches at the ceremonies. When he met with atomic bomb survivors, he said Tokyo has a “different approach” to the shared goal of eliminating nuclear weapons, thereby denying Japan's participation in the pact.

The nuclear weapons ban treaty, adopted last year with approvals of 122 countries at the United Nations, embodies the fruition of longstanding calls by atomic bomb survivors. The treaty's spirit, which stresses the inhumane nature of nuclear arms, has a universal value that has much in common with "human security," one of the stated pillars of Japan's diplomacy.

Abe, however, did not even pay homage to the significance of the pact, any more than he did last year. It is all too natural that representatives of atomic bomb survivor groups felt disappointed by the attitude of the prime minister, who was mostly only reading aloud statements on the government stance during both the ceremonies and the meetings with the atomic bomb survivors.

Abe said of the current state: "differences in the approaches of various countries on nuclear disarmament have become evident."

That is true. **A deep sense of distrust is spreading between nuclear weapon states and non-nuclear weapon states.**

And where does the responsibility lie? The nuclear weapon states, which are spending huge sums of money on modernizing their nuclear arsenals, have a "special responsibility to lead," as U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres rightly said in his speech in Nagasaki on Aug. 9.

Abe described himself as a "mediator" for bridging the gap between nuclear weapon states and non-nuclear weapon states. Given that, his words would sound persuasive only if he took initial action to call on nuclear weapon states to reduce their nuclear arsenals.

Far from that, Foreign Minister Taro Kono has "highly appreciated" a new strategy of nuclear arms buildup that was set out by the U.S. administration of President Donald Trump.

By no means would Japan be able to live up to its duty of a country that suffered atomic bombings if it were only ratifying a military policy that could be described as representing a superpower's egotism.

It is true that, as a matter of reality, Japan's security policy is premised on the U.S. "nuclear umbrella." But citing that as the grounds for continuing to reject the nuclear weapons ban treaty is tantamount to turning its back on international opinion.

Many world citizens are no different from atomic bomb survivors in their deepening sense of crisis. More countries could set out on nuclear weapons development amid the ongoing spread of national egocentrism.

Tokyo should advance multilateral diplomacy for seeking closer ties with international opinion, not the least for preserving the global framework for preventing nuclear proliferation.

Abe said Japan is determined to "lead" the efforts of the international community toward the goal of eliminating nuclear weapons. The prime minister should live up to that pledge not just in his words but also in his actions.

Toward recognition of N. Korea as de facto nuke power?

September 11, 2018

Second Kim-Trump summit could lay groundwork for arms control talks — and de facto nuclear state recognition

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2018/09/11/asia-pacific/second-kim-trump-summit-lay-groundwork-arms-control-talks-de-facto-nuclear-state-recognition/#.W5fwCPkyWos>

by Jesse Johnson

Staff Writer

A second meeting between U.S. President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un is being planned, the White House said Monday. Such a summit, some experts say, could help break the current impasse in denuclearization talks and lay the groundwork for what ultimately may be the only way forward: arms control measures and the recognition of Pyongyang as a de facto nuclear power.

White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders told a televised news conference that Trump had received a “very warm, very positive letter” from Kim, the primary purpose of which was to ask for the second meeting, which she said the administration was open to and “in the process of coordinating.” Asked if the possible meeting might take place in Washington this time, Sanders offered no concrete details and said that the White House would not release the full letter without Kim’s permission, but added that the talks are “certainly something that we want to take place” and that the administration will continue to work on making it happen.

Kim agreed at the landmark June summit in Singapore to a vaguely worded 1½-page joint statement to “work towards the complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula” while Trump committed to “provide security guarantees” to the regime.

Sanders also touted what she said was Trump’s “tremendous success” on the nuclear issue, noting that the focus of a parade held Sunday marking the 70th anniversary of the North’s founding was “one of the first times ... where they weren’t highlighting their nuclear arsenal.”

Pyongyang had used some recent military parades marking key anniversaries to display mock-ups of powerful new weapons systems, including long-range missiles believed capable of striking the continental United States.

“We consider that a sign of good faith,” Sanders said, adding that the letter “certainly showed a commitment to continuing conversations ... and a continued commitment to focus on denuclearization of the peninsula.”

On Twitter, Trump said “experts” were heralding the absence of long-range missiles as a sign of the Kim regime’s “commitment to denuclearization.” He thanked Kim and called the move a “very positive statement.”

“We will both prove everyone wrong! There is nothing like good dialogue from two people that like each other!”

Sanders’ and Trump’s comments, however, contrasted with a report published Monday citing U.S. intelligence saying that Kim’s regime has escalated efforts to conceal its nuclear activity.

Citing three senior U.S. officials, NBC News reported that in the three months since the Singapore summit, the North has been observed building structures to obscure the entrance to at least one warhead storage facility and moved warheads out of the facility.

The same report quoted three current and former senior U.S. officials as saying that intelligence estimates show the North could produce five to eight new nuclear weapons in 2018 — a pace virtually identical to their assessment of the regime’s production of about six per year prior to the Trump-Kim summit.

While it’s unclear how a Trump-Kim meeting could kick-start the stalled nuclear talks, speculation has grown that the U.S. president might offer up a declaration of the Korean War’s end in exchange for the Kim regime issuing a declaration of its nuclear and missile programs and assets.

Last week, Kim told South Korean officials visiting Pyongyang that he would “cooperate closely” with the U.S. — even possibly accepting “stronger” denuclearization measures if there is reciprocation for earlier moves taken by the North, including the dismantling of a missile engine test site and the destruction of a nuclear test facility.

Kim also said that he was concerned that the international community did not fully “understand his intentions” to denuclearize, and urged them to recognize the “goodwill” behind the earlier moves that he said demonstrated his commitment.

But while a second Trump-Kim summit could improve U.S.-North Korean bilateral ties and reduce the risk of a conflict, it would also further decimate the already weakened U.S.-led “maximum pressure” campaign meant to rein in the North’s nuclear program via tough sanctions and diplomatic isolation, said Zhao Tong, a North Korea expert at the Carnegie-Tsinghua Center for Global Policy in Beijing.

Pyongyang, Zhao said, could use the meeting to “consolidate its international image as a normal and reasonable member of the international community” — despite possessing nuclear weapons.

As for an end-of-war declaration, taking such a step would likely be seen as a signal that both parties are serious about moving discussions forward.

“It would represent the official end of decadeslong hostility and help pave the ground to begin building trust,” Zhao said.

“Such a declaration will help keep the current diplomatic momentum going and probably will lead to additional North Korea concessions about its nuclear and missile programs,” he added.

Still, before real trust is built — and the U.S.-North Korea relationship is transformed as the two parties committed to in the Singapore Declaration — future concessions are likely to take the shape of limiting and capping the North’s nuclear capabilities, rather than outright relinquishing their weapons.

“The unfortunate reality is that we may have to face a nuclear-capable North Korea for the foreseeable future,” Zhao said.

But a simultaneous or action-for-action approach that in the near-term lets the North keep its arsenal and effectively recognizes that it possesses nuclear arms in a manner similar to Pakistan, India and Israel, could pose grave risks to regional and global security.

“That’s what North Korea wants,” said Brad Glosserman, a visiting professor at Tokyo’s Tama University, and a regional security expert. “It wants these negotiations to grind out so long, that its status as a de facto nuclear state becomes essentially accepted in the world. That is one of its primary objectives, perhaps even more important than ending the (U.S.-South Korean) alliance.”

North Korea’s model, he said, is Pakistan, which conducted nuclear tests in May 1998, shortly after nuclear tests by India, declaring itself a nuclear weapon state. Pakistan currently possesses a growing nuclear arsenal, and remains outside both the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT).

For neighboring Japan, Glosserman said the future direction of the talks could pose a grave threat.

“If these become arms control and nonproliferation talks, rather than dismantlement and disarmament talks, then you have a very serious problem with Japanese support,” he said.

Tokyo has been one of the strongest backers of the pressure campaign, though it has adjusted its stance as the mercurial Trump has shifted his position.

But Glosserman believes there could be a breaking point in Japan’s alliance with the U.S. if pushed too far on the issue.

“Are they going to go nuclear? No. But are they going to be very worried about U.S. commitments? Yes.” he said.

11 countries sign and ratify nuclear ban treaty

September 27, 2018

Nuclear Ban Treaty 38% of the way into force after only one year

<https://www.pressenza.com/2018/09/nuclear-ban-treaty-38-of-the-way-into-force-after-only-one-year/>

27.09.2018 - New York, USA - Tony Robinson

This post is also available in: Spanish, French, Italian, German, Greek

11 countries sign and ratify the TPNW on the 26th September 2018 (Image by Robert Mardini for the ICRC on twitter)

Anti-nuclear activists around the world were celebrating the tremendous achievement that the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) is almost half way into force on this the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons. The date, 26th September, commemorates the day in 1983 when Lieutenant Colonel Stanislav Petrov of the Soviet Air Defence Forces overruled the protocols and decided that the incoming nuclear weapons appearing on his warning screens were just a false alarm and so decided to not inform his superiors. This action has been credited with having prevented a nuclear war which would have wiped out human civilisation as we know it.

The surge in ratifications this week is due to the UN General Assembly being in action with heads of government flying into New York from all over the world, and activists from the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) have been taking advantage of the opportunity to get more signatures and ratifications onto the books.

Today, Antigua and Barbuda, Benin, Brunei, Guinea-Bissau, Myanmar, Seychelles and Timor-Leste all added their signatures, while Gambia, Samoa, San Marino and Vanuatu all deposited their instruments of ratification; Angola and Saint Lucia are scheduled to sign tomorrow.

The TPNW is proving itself to be the most effective disarmament treaty ever at gathering signatures; at this rate of ratification it will be in force by the 2020 NPT review conference which will seek once again to bring nuclear armed states to talk seriously about their disarmament obligations.

On this subject, a high-level meeting of the General Assembly took place in New York today also marking the special date. At this event Secretary General Antonio Guterres said, "The only sure way to eliminate the threat posed by nuclear weapons is to eliminate the weapons themselves." Later referring to the TPNW, Guterres added, "The Treaty is a testament to the continued need for, and utility of, multilateralism."

Some countries have taken advantage of the High-Level Meeting to again repeat their tired old hypocritical speeches from previous years. Dutch Prime Minister, Mark Rutte told the assembly, "The devastating consequences of the use of weapons of mass destruction underline the urgent need to take action. The use of these weapons must never become the new normal." And he said this without any apparent hint of irony given that The Netherlands hosts nuclear weapons on its territory; is complicit in preparations for their use; and, refuses to join the only treaty outlawing them.

The face of Jizo



A still photo from the film "The Face of Jizo" (Image courtesy of The Face of Jizo Partners, 2003)

The Mainichi holding new int'l essay contest on Hiroshima A-bomb play 'The Face of Jizo'

<http://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20180719/p2a/00m/0na/027000c>

July 19, 2018 (Mainichi Japan)

The Mainichi is holding a new international essay contest on the theme of the play "The Face of Jizo," penned by the late Hisashi Inoue about the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, for our young readers around the world. Beatrice Fihn, the Executive Director of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), is encouraging youths worldwide to take action toward a world free of nuclear weapons by using the play and the contest to spark their imagination and motivation. ICAN won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2017 for its major role in realizing the United Nations Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in July of the same year.

- **【Related】** Youth should draw imagination from A-bomb play to act for world free of nuclear weapons
- **【Related】** Prologue of The Face of Jizo by author Hisashi Inoue
- **【Related】** The Face of Jizo: Part 1
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- **【Related】** The Face of Jizo: Profiles of Hisashi Inoue and Roger Pulvers

The full script of the four-act play will be made available on The Mainichi website from Aug. 6 through Oct. 31, courtesy of copyright holder Yuri Inoue and Roger Pulvers, who translated the work into English. One act per day will be posted beginning on Aug. 3, making the entire play available by Aug. 6.

"The Face of Jizo" is considered a theatrical masterpiece of postwar Japan. After reading the accounts of several hundred atomic bomb survivors or hibakusha, Inoue decided to write the play not as a tragedy, but as a comedy, in order to convey the horror of the atomic bomb to as many people as possible. The Mainichi Editorial Office shares Inoue's wish, and hopes that as many people as possible will read the script so that the tragedy endured by Hiroshima and Nagasaki will be remembered and never happen again.

The essays on the play must be no more than 1,000 words in English, and from readers between the ages of 13 and 23. The essays can be submitted to jizo@mainichi.co.jp. Entrants must include their name, address, date of birth, school, and school year, and the subject of the email must be "Face of Jizo Essay" followed by the entrant's name when submitting an essay. Submissions are limited to one per person. The deadline for submitting the essays is Oct. 31, 2018, and entries will be judged by a panel including writer and film director Roger Pulvers, former Hiroshima Mayor Tadatoshi Akiba and The Mainichi Editor-in-Chief Hiroaki Wada. The winning essays will be announced via The Mainichi website on Dec. 1, 2018, and prizes worth 100 U.S. dollars each will be awarded to the top three essay writers. The contest is supported by Kyoto University of Foreign Studies and Sophia University.
(Please note the copyright for the winning essays will be transferred to the organizers of the contest.)

Japan continues to ignore nuke ban treaty

October 15, 2018

Japan to ignore nuke ban treaty again in resolution seeking elimination of nukes

https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20181015/p2a/00m/0na/026000c#cxrecs_s

TOKYO -- The government of Japan plans to continue last year's practice of ignoring the 2017 Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in its draft resolution seeking the elimination of nuclear weapons to be submitted to the First Committee (disarmament) of the United Nation's General Assembly as early as Oct. 18, according to people familiar with the decision.

- **【Related】** Nagasaki mayor calls for security policy independent of nuclear weapons
- **【Related】** Editorial: Japan must commit to abolition of nuclear weapons
- **【Related】** US Ambassador Hagerty lays wreath at memorial for Hiroshima A-bomb victims

Japan is under the nuclear umbrella of the United States, and has not signed the treaty out of consideration of the U.S. position against the international accord. Tokyo has explained that it is trying to serve as "a bridge" between nuclear and non-nuclear weapons states, but not mentioning the treaty in the upcoming resolution could be viewed as the government's unwillingness to tackle nuclear disarmament head-on.

Japan has submitted a draft resolution seeking the elimination of nuclear weapons to the United Nations every year since 1994. The speech reflects Japan's policy to try to reach that goal through gradual disarmament by nuclear weapons states while maintaining the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). This agreement allows five countries -- the U.S., Russia, the United Kingdom, France and China -- to maintain their nuclear arsenals but urges them to commit themselves to nuclear disarmament while banning other signatories from possessing the weapons of mass destruction.

This year's draft resolution will again focus on the importance of confidence building measures and the strengthening of cooperation between nuclear weapons states and other countries. It will also give credit to the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula agreed upon at a summit meeting between U.S. President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un. In contrast to last year's resolution accusing Pyongyang of posing "grave and imminent threats to the peace and security of the region and the world," and presenting "grave challenges to the regime centered on the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons," this year's resolution will call for North Korea to return to the NPT regime.

Including a reference to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in the proposed resolution, said an individual linked to the government, "will prevent the U.S. and other nuclear weapons states from supporting the resolution."

Last year, support for Japan's resolution, also lacking a reference to the treaty, garnered support from 144 countries, 23 less than the previous year, as many non-nuclear states reacted negatively to Tokyo's position, saying Japan is under the nuclear umbrella extended by Washington and therefore is closer to nuclear weapons states. The government of Japan, therefore, hopes to increase the number of supportive countries by trying to persuade them that the resolution represents both the stances of nuclear and non-nuclear weapons states.

(Japanese original by Muneyoshi Mitsuda, Political News Department)

Trump to terminate nuclear arms control (Reagan-Gorbachev) agreement

October 21, 2018

Trump's Counterproductive Decision to "Terminate" the INF Treaty

https://www.armscontrol.org/issue-briefs/2018-10/trumps-counterproductive-decision-terminate-inf-treaty?fbclid=IwAR1nJUC2x5xRUCx1TN0mmwn-p_EAmr9AFkcAl0v_KXrB1Ykm8oU3IeXqigo

Volume 10, Issue 9, October 21, 2018

Under the influence of his new National Security Advisor, John Bolton, Trump announced Saturday at a campaign rally that he will "terminate" a key nuclear arms control agreement that helped end the Cold War—the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty in response to a long-running dispute over Russian noncompliance with the treaty.

The decision represents a shift in the administration's INF response strategy which was announced in January and before Bolton joined the administration.

Trump's move to blow-up the INF Treaty is unnecessary and self-defeating wrong turn that could lead to an unconstrained and dangerous nuclear arms competition with Russia.

The breakdown of the agreement and uncertain future of the 2010 New Strategic Arms Reductions Treaty (New START) creates the most serious nuclear arms control crisis in decades.

The Russian Foreign Ministry said today that the U.S. withdrawal from the INF Treaty is "unacceptable" and "dangerous." Russia continues to assert that there is no basis for the U.S. claim that Russia has violated the treaty, but the Russian Foreign Ministry said "there is still room for dialogue."

Bolton meets Monday in Moscow with President Putin and Foreign Minister Lavrov.

The INF Treaty Still Matters

The INF Treaty, which was negotiated by President Ronald Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, required the United States and the Soviet Union to eliminate and permanently forswear all of their nuclear and conventional ground-launched ballistic and cruise missiles with ranges of 500 to 5,500 km (300 to 3,500 miles).

The treaty successfully eliminated an entire class of destabilizing nuclear weapons that were deployed in Europe and helped bring an end to the spiraling Cold War arms race. It has been a cornerstone of the U.S.-Russian nuclear arms control architecture. And as NATO defense ministers said earlier this month, the INF Treaty “has been crucial to Euro-Atlantic security.”

Without the INF Treaty, we will likely see the return of Cold War-style tensions over U.S. and Russian deployments of intermediate-range missiles in Europe and elsewhere.

Russian Noncompliance

The INF Treaty, while very successful, has been at risk for some time. In 2014, Washington charged that Moscow had tested a weapon, the 9M729 ground-launched cruise missile, at a range beyond the limit set by the treaty. In 2017, the Pentagon declared that Moscow had begun deploying the weapon.

Russia denies that it has violated the treaty and asked the United States to divulge the technical details behind the charge. Moscow has expressed its own concerns about U.S. compliance with the pact, notably that U.S. missile defense interceptor platforms deployed in eastern Europe could be used for offense purposes that would violate the treaty.

Diplomatic efforts to resolve the issue have been limited and to date unsuccessful. Since Trump took office, U.S. and Russian officials have met only twice to try to resolve the compliance dispute.

Clearly, neither side has exhausted the diplomatic options that could resolve their concerns.

U.S. Withdrawal Would Be An “Own Goal.”

Trump claims that the United States is pulling out to show Russia that it will not tolerate Russia’s alleged violation of the treaty. “We’re not going to let them violate a nuclear agreement and do weapons and we’re not allowed to,” Trump said.

Trump may want to sound tough, but the reality is that withdrawing from the treaty weakens U.S. and allied security and does not provide the United States any military advantage in Europe or elsewhere.

- U.S. withdrawal does nothing to bring Russia back into compliance with the INF Treaty and it distracts from the fact that it was Russia’s actions that precipitated the INF Treaty crisis.
- U.S. withdrawal from the INF Treaty opens the door for Russia to produce and deploy the missile of concern, the 9M729, in greater numbers without any constraints.

- There is no military need for the United States to develop, as Trump has proposed, a new and costly INF Treaty-noncompliant missile. The United States can already deploy air- and sea-launched systems that can threaten the same Russian targets that ground-launched missiles that are prohibited by INF Treaty would.
- NATO does not support a new INF Treaty-range missile in Europe and no country has offered to host it. Attempting to force the alliance to accept a new, potentially nuclear missile would divide the alliance in ways that would delight the Kremlin.

Even without the INF Treaty in force, the U.S. Congress and NATO governments should reject Trump's push to develop a new U.S. ground-based INF Treaty-range missile in Europe (or elsewhere), and instead focus on maintaining conventional military preparedness to deter adversaries without violating the treaty.

Does the United States Need Ground-launched, INF Treaty-Range Missiles to Counter China?

No. In 2011, long before any Russian INF compliance concerns surfaced, John Bolton proposed in a Wall Street Journal op-ed that Washington should to withdraw from the treaty in order to counter China, which is not party to the treaty. In his Oct. 20 remarks on withdrawing from the treaty, Trump also pointed to China as a reason for abandoning the INF Treaty.

When asked at a congressional hearing in July 2017 about whether withdrawal from the INF Treaty could be useful because it would allow the U.S. to develop new ground-based systems to hit targets in China, vice-chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Paul Selva said that such a move was unnecessary because the United States can already hold those targets at risk with treaty-compliant air- and sea-based assets.

In his remarks Saturday, Trump suggested he might support a ban on INF Treaty-range missiles if "Russia comes to us and China comes to us" ... "and let's none of us develop those weapons." The idea of "multilateralizing INF has been around for more than a decade, but neither Russia nor Washington have devoted serious effort into the concept and China is highly unlikely to join an agreement that would eliminate the bulk of its missile arsenal.

Trump's INF Treaty decision is a debacle. But without New START it will be even worse

If the INF Treaty collapses, as appears likely, the only remaining treaty regulating the world's two largest nuclear stockpiles will be New START. New START is due to expire in 2021 unless Trump and Putin agree to extend it by five years as allowed for in Article XIV of the agreement.

Unfortunately, Bolton may try to sabotage that treaty too. Since he arrived at the White House in May, he has been slow-rolling an interagency review on whether to extend New START and refusing to take up Putin's offer to begin talks on its extension.

Key Republican and Democratic Senators are on record in support of New START extension, which can be accomplished without further Senate or Duma approval.

Instead, one option Bolton is talking about is a "Moscow Treaty" approach that would dispense with New START and its rigorous inspection system on warheads and missiles to ensure compliance. This option

would simply set limits on deployed warheads only and without any verification—an approach Moscow is very unlikely to accept because it could give the United States a significant breakout advantage.

The current crisis makes it all the more important to get a serious U.S.-Russian arms control dialogue back on track.

Trump and Putin should agree to relaunch their stalled strategic stability dialogue and commit to reaching an early agreement to extend New START by five years to 2026 – which is essential if the two sides are to meet their legal commitment under the nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty "to "pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament"

If they fail to extend New START, an even more dangerous phase in U.S.-Russian relations is just over the horizon.—*DARYL G. KIMBALL, executive director, and KINGSTON REIF, director for disarmament and threat reduction policy*

Posted: October 21, 2018

Donald Trump says U.S. will pull out of intermediate range nuke pact; Mikhail Gorbachev calls plan 'mistake'

https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2018/10/21/world/politics-diplomacy-world/trump-says-u-s-will-pull-intermediate-range-nuke-pact/#.W8zUJ_mYSos

AP, Reuters

ELKO, NEVADA/MOSCOW – U.S. President Donald Trump says his intention to scrap a landmark arms control agreement Russia follows years of violations by Moscow in developing prohibited weapons, and “we’re not going to be the only one to adhere to it.” The Kremlin said the pullout “would be a very dangerous step.” [...]

Japanese reactions to Trump's decision on INF

October 21, 2018

Reactions to Trump's decision on INF

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20181021_17/

Some people in the Japanese atomic-bombed cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki are criticizing US President Donald Trump's announcement that he would withdraw his country from the nuclear missile treaty.

A 72-year-old man in Hiroshima, whose parents and sister suffered the 1945 attack on the city, says the disastrous scenes he heard from his parents as a boy are deeply etched in his mind. He says in order to achieve world peace, countries should not possess nuclear weapons. He says the Japanese government needs to clearly oppose Trump's decision.

A 53-year-old man says he is against the US move, saying he wants a nuclear-free world. He criticized the Japanese government for what he sees as its weak-kneed stance against the US. He says he hopes Japanese officials will speak out.

A 55-year-old woman says Trump's statement made her sad because she strongly wants nuclear weapons to be abolished. She says without the support of major powers like the US and Russia it would be difficult to achieve that. She added the countries should not have nuclear weapons if they are telling others not to.

Some survivors of the atomic bombing of Nagasaki are expressing concerns. The head of a citizens' group in Nagasaki protesting nuclear tests, Takeshi Yamakawa, says he is worried about the future impact of the US withdrawal.

Another survivor who joined a sit-in at the Peace Memorial Park in the city describes the move as another reckless action by Trump. He adds the US president is not consistent in seeking North Korea's denuclearization, while expanding the nuclear buildup in his country.

Another survivor says the pullout goes against the trend toward nuclear abolition triggered by last year's adoption of UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

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What about the INF Treaty?

WHAT ABOUT THE INF TREATY?

<http://orepa.org/what-about-the-inf-treaty/>

THE INF TREATY IN THE NEWS

Why, suddenly, a shot-across-the-bow announcement from the President that the United States will withdraw from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty? I say “suddenly” because the INF Treaty has been a bone of contention since at least 2012 when President Obama certified that Russia was in violation. Yet neither Obama nor Trump, until now, felt it required action.

I can think of two possible reasons—but first, a quick bit of background.

BACKGROUND

The INF Treaty was signed by the US and Soviet Union in 1987 and became effective in 1988. It eliminated all nuclear and conventional missiles and their launchers with ranges below 3,420 miles—sea-launched missiles were not included. British and French weapons were also not included.

The treaty grew out of the Soviet deployment, in 1977, of mobile-launched ballistic missiles with a range of just under the SALT II Treaty limit of 3,400 miles. Western European leaders raised concerns these weapons made them vulnerable to attack, and a strategy of negotiations backed up by the threat of deploying new NATO missile launchers across Europe was adopted.

Many proposals and even more rounds of negotiation ensued. Finally, in 1986, Soviet president Gorbachev proposed the total elimination of all nuclear weapons by the year 2000; the US countered with a phased reduction of INF missiles in Europe and Asia, to zero by 1989. It happened. The US and Soviet Union destroyed more than 2,500 weapons between them by June 1, 1991.

Ten years later, in 2001, President George W Bush announced the United States would unilaterally withdraw from a different treaty, the Anti Ballistic Missile Treaty, because the US wanted to deploy a missile defense system—a program already underway in the US.

Six years after that, President Putin declared the INF Treaty no longer served Russia's interest, linking a decision to pull out to US action on the missile defense system.

In 2012, President Obama accused Russia of violating the INF Treaty when it tested a new cruise missile. Russia has argued that the US bases in Poland and Romania that can launch Tomahawk missiles is a violation of the Treaty; Russia also notes the US use of drones is a violation of the Treaty.

And it must be noted that the US has embarked on a \$1.7 trillion dollar plan to modernize its nuclear weapons stockpile, production infrastructure, and delivery vehicles including low-yield weapons and new missiles systems which inject new concerns into the security plans of other countries. Modernization means weapons labs can hope for almost unlimited funding and free rein to design new nuclear threats. WHY BRING IT UP NOW?

The likeliest answer is two words: John Bolton. Seven years ago, voices in conservative circles raised concerns about China's intermediate-range nuclear forces which are not included in the bilateral INF Treaty between the US and Russia. President Trump has included this concern in his announcement. It is possible that his declaration is an attempt to get China to the arms control table.

The ascension of Bolton, a hard-right hawk who has never seemed to mind the idea of a nuclear arms race, opened the door for the advancement of this policy idea which had failed to get traction in the Obama years.

The flaw in this attempt is simple: China has no incentive to come to the table, and to do so now, when the US and Russia hold a massive advantage over China in total nuclear weapons (an estimated 1,500 each compared to China's 300), would erase any leverage China might have to demand further US and Russian reductions.

The other possible explanation for the timing of Trump's announcement reflects the ongoing strategy of the Administration to create and advance distractions at times of stress in order to control the media which, for the most part, is happy to play its part. Headlines about an arcane but important nuclear weapons treaty push the Mueller investigation off the "breaking news" newsfeed of TV cable media programs and play into the pre-election Republican strategy of stoking fears of all kinds in the electorate as voters head to the polls.

It seems to me that the answer to "Why now?" is likely a combination of the two options—a policy

strategy the right-wing has loved for years is being pushed at a moment when a good distraction is helpful to the wider cause.

WHAT SHOULD WE SAY?

First, arms control treaties are, as a rule, good. It is difficult in the context of the existential threat of nuclear weapons—the arsenals of the US and Russia, if unleashed, would kill hundreds of millions of people in one afternoon and render the earth almost completely uninhabitable within a decade—to make a relative judgment about intermediate threats.

On the other hand, any instrument that constrains the nuclear powers is a good thing. Treaties such as the INF serve a purpose. In addition to getting rid of missiles and launchers back in 1991, the treaty also provided verification and inspection protocols which require communication and cooperation among the adversarial powers—this is a good thing.

At the very least, the INF Treaty serves a good purpose if only in the “things not getting worse” category.

In the decades since its passage, actions on both the US and Russian side have undermined confidence in the treaty—technological advances that were unforeseen thirty years ago challenge the security assurances the treaty was meant to provide.

One possible positive outcome of the Trump administration’s declaration could be a new round of negotiations about security that addresses the issues raised back in 1977 in today’s context. In the meantime, the positive elements of the INF should not be abandoned by either side.

China should be heard. Welcomed to the table if they decide to participate. Should they decline to join the conversation until the US and Russia reduce their stockpiles to relatively parity—around 500 warheads and delivery systems, Russia and the US should listen carefully. Many experts in both countries believe such nuclear force levels are achievable with no reduction in security.

Trump’s initiative, regardless of timing or intent, could have unintended, positive consequences. Republican presidents have been successful in the past in advancing arms control agendas, and nuclear abolitionists can support those efforts as steps on the way to zero.

SO — TALK ABOUT IT

The 1988 INF Treaty grew out of a concern raised 10 years earlier. Before it was finalized, it had sparked conversations between US and Soviet leaders that included proposals for complete nuclear disarmament with an actual target date!

Any effort to rework the INF Treaty should address security concerns of Russia and Europe and should consider radical but achievable proposals—like the closure of NATO nuclear-equipped bases in Germany, Turkey, Netherlands, Belgium and Italy matched by Russian actions to reduce the ten-minute threat posed by current Russian missile systems.

If, in the course of these discussions, other arms control or disarmament proposals arise, they should be

considered in the context of the global desire to eliminate all nuclear threats reflected in the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons approved by 122 countries at the United Nations in 2017. That Treaty is currently making its way through the ratification and accession processes in dozens of countries.

While the negotiations happen, stability is of critical importance—intemperate language or actions should be avoided on all sides. The issue of nuclear weapons and global security is too important to play politics with.

Unleashing nuclear arms race

October 23, 2018

Editorial: US departure from INF treaty will unleash nuclear arms race

<https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20181023/p2a/00m/0na/009000c>

On Dec. 8, 1987, U.S. President Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev, general secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, firmly shook hands after they signed the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty. It was a scene symbolizing the end of the Cold War.

- **【Related】** Trump says US will leave INF nuke treaty, angers Russia, China, A-bomb survivors
- **【Related】** Editorial: Japan must commit to abolition of nuclear weapons
- **【Related】** Hiroshima mayor questions nuclear nations' nationalism, wants Japan to do more

More than three decades after that, U.S. President Donald Trump announced his intention to pull his country out of the INF treaty. Trump explained that he is doing so because Russia, which took over the treaty from the Soviet Union, is in violation of the bilateral accord, and that China is becoming a looming threat to the U.S.

The secretary general of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization has also suggested that Russia is "in violation" of the treaty, so the description cannot be written off as a unilateral assertion by the Trump administration. But it is too dangerous to rush toward departure from the treaty.

U.S. presidential adviser on national security and a known hawk, John Bolton, is now visiting Russia to discuss this issue. We want Washington to refrain from withdrawing from the treaty. Russia should go beyond mere denials of a violation and prove its innocence in a sincere manner.

The INF treaty, which completely bans ground-launched ballistic and cruise missiles with ranges of 500 to 5,500 kilometers, has been a resounding success in the history of nuclear disarmament. Its collapse would usher in the redeployment of intermediate nuclear missiles in places such as Europe by the U.S. and Russia. Tensions in areas around Japan would certainly rise.

On top of that, the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty between Washington and Moscow will expire in 2021. This treaty caps for each country the number of deployed strategic nuclear warheads at 1,550, while limiting the number of deployed and non-deployed delivery systems such as intercontinental and submarine ballistic missiles and heavy bombers to no more than 800.

Abolishing these two treaties, which are among the few instruments preventing nuclear arms races, would kick-start military buildups observed during the Cold War, and a new nuclear state might emerge out of the struggle. Washington's departure from the INF treaty will only undercut its efforts to denuclearize North Korea.

Rather than going down this path, nuclear disarmament should be pursued in the spirit of the INF treaty. The Trump administration emphasized Russian threats and referred to the development and deployment of low-yield nuclear weapons in its Nuclear Posture Review. But leading international negotiations to lower and mitigate the risks for the world is more beneficial than expanding a nuclear arsenal to counter threats.

This problem over the INF treaty comes from nuclear weapons states' failure to reduce and eliminate their warheads as stipulated by the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), and recognize the United Nations' Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. If they really respect the NPT, the United States and Russia should continue honoring the INF treaty, and start new talks on nuclear disarmament. Washington, Moscow and Beijing, the latter of whose nuclear forces are far more powerful than 30 years ago, should pursue serious negotiations to reduce their nuclear arms.

Bomb survivors "betrayed"

November 19, 2018

EDITORIAL: Japan failing to 'bridge' divide between nuke, non-nuke states

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201811190018.html>

Serving as a mediator between two groups with conflicting opinions requires winning the trust of both sides and helping them find common ground by providing channels of communications between the parties.

Japan has been trying to be a "bridge" between the group of countries calling for a ban on nuclear weapons and the bloc of nations that remain dependent on nuclear deterrence, mainly the nuclear powers.

In reality, however, Japan is not just failing in its self-appointed role but also acting in a way that could further undermine the credibility of its unique position as the only country that has suffered nuclear attacks.

Earlier this month, the United Nations General Assembly First Committee, which deals with issues concerning disarmament and international security, adopted two nuclear arms-related resolutions.

One urges all nations to sign and ratify the 2017 Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which was adopted by the United Nations in July last year. This resolution was adopted with the support of more than 120 countries.

But Japan, along with the United States, Russia and other nuclear powers, voted against it. Tokyo has been consistently distancing itself from the landmark treaty.

Countries promoting the treaty have expressed, again, disappointment and criticism over Japan's stance.

Survivors of the 1945 atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, who are longing to see their country sign the treaty, have said they have been "betrayed."

The other is a Japan-sponsored resolution calling for the total elimination of nuclear weapons. It was passed by the First Committee with the support of 160 countries. Tokyo has successfully promoted a similar resolution for the past 25 consecutive years.

But the latest version, like the one adopted last year, did not refer to the nuclear arms ban treaty. As a result, many of the nations promoting the treaty abstained.

Two of the nuclear powers, the United States and France, also abstained although they voted for last year's resolution. They were apparently displeased with stronger rhetoric in the call for nuclear arms reductions.

These facts are raising serious concerns that Japan's diplomatic efforts to serve as a mediator between the two camps are badly misguided.

In early November, the Japanese members of Mayors for Peace, an international association of cities for promoting peace chaired by the mayor of Hiroshima, held a meeting in Gifu Prefecture. The Japanese members represent most of the municipalities in this country.

Many participants voiced concerns about how Japan can perform the role of a bridge between the two blocs. The municipalities adopted a written request to Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in which they called on the government to sign the treaty.

The Group of Eminent Persons for Substantive Advancement of Nuclear Disarmament, set up by the Japanese government, is Tokyo's attempt to map out a new strategy for serving as a bridge through discussions with experts from both nuclear and non-nuclear countries.

The group held its third meeting in mid-November in Nagasaki. Nagasaki Mayor Tomihisa Taue had urged the members to discuss national security issues from the viewpoint of what happened to "people under the mushroom cloud."

But many atomic bomb survivors and members of nongovernmental organizations dedicated to nuclear disarmament have grown disgruntled with the group. During a meeting with the experts of the group, one of the critics argued that serving as a mediator does not mean acting as a spectator.

The Japanese government should redefine its role for nuclear disarmament from its basic status as a country that has suffered the devastation of atomic bombings.

Japan's efforts should be focused on conveying messages from atomic bomb survivors to the world and emphasizing the inhuman nature of nuclear weapons.

With both the United States and Russia moving toward placing greater importance on nuclear arms and enhancing their nuclear arsenals, Japan should be keenly aware of the heavy weight of its responsibility and role for the international movement toward a future free from nuclear weapons.

--The Asahi Shimbun, Nov. 19

Protecting diplomacy

November 22, 2018

U.S. to scale back major joint military exercise in bid to keep North Korean nuclear diplomacy on track

https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2018/11/22/asia-pacific/u-s-scale-back-major-joint-military-exercise-bid-keep-north-korean-nuclear-diplomacy-track/#.W_aHpzGNyos

by Jesse Johnson

Staff Writer

In a bid to keep Washington's ongoing denuclearization talks with North Korea from faltering, U.S. Defense Secretary Jim Mattis said Wednesday that a major joint military exercise with South Korea would be scaled back.

"We have taken a decision," Mattis said, according to a transcript of conversation with reporters. "We are not canceling exercises. We are realigning one exercise."

Asked if it was the Foal Eagle exercise, a large-scale drill typically held in the spring, Mattis confirmed this was the case.

"Foal Eagle is being reorganized a bit **to keep it at a level that will not be harmful to diplomacy,**" he said.

Mattis did not provide details on what a scaled back version of the exercise would look like.

The U.S. and South Korea have canceled their last four scheduled large-scale joint exercises on the Korean Peninsula as part of an attempt to give diplomats more breathing room in the negotiations with Pyongyang. North Korea has long viewed the exercises with skepticism, blasting them as a rehearsal for invasion. The U.S. and the South say they are defensive in nature.

On Thursday, North Korean state-run media criticized Seoul for continuing its own military exercises after a spate of meetings and agreements between the two country's leaders.

"The south Korean military claims that the war drills 'have nothing to do with inter-Korean agreements' and 'are of defensive nature,'" the official Korean Central News Agency said. "Its claim is nothing but a pretext to cover up its sinister intention for confrontation.

"Dialogue and military confrontation, peace and war drills can never go hand in hand," it added.

The Foal Eagle exercise has in recent years included about 11,500 U.S. troops and 290,000 South Korean troops, and has consisted of field drills involving ground, air, naval and special operations forces. It has also typically been held together with a computer-simulated exercise known as Key Resolve, which last year included about 12,200 Americans and 10,000 South Korean personnel.

U.S. President Donald Trump, just after his landmark June summit with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, unexpectedly announced that he would order a halt to large-scale exercises — a move that caught even the Pentagon by surprise.

The U.S. leader has repeatedly characterized the exercises as "war games," calling them both "provocative" and "expensive."

Mattis has worked to reassure Pentagon staff and U.S. officials concerned about the degradation of the combat readiness of the 28,500 U.S. service members in South Korea if the exercises continue to be canceled.

It's unclear if any move to downgrade the exercises will help kick-start nuclear negotiations with North Korea. Talks have been largely stalled since Trump and Kim agreed at their historic Singapore summit in June to work toward the "complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula."

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo has held out hope of a second Kim-Trump meeting early next year.

Pompeo had been scheduled to meet with Kim's right-hand man in New York earlier this month to begin laying the groundwork for the second summit, but that meeting was abruptly postponed a day before it was supposed to take place.

Ban Ki-moon urges N. Korea to denuclearise

December 3, 2018

Ban Ki-moon urges N. Korea to take denuclearization steps

<https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20181203/p2g/00m/0in/082000c>

TOKYO (AP) -- Former U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon urged North Korean leader Kim Jong Un on Monday to take concrete steps toward complete denuclearization and gain the trust of the international community if he wants sanctions lifted.

- **【Related】** Trump says to meet N. Korean leader Kim in Jan. or Feb.
- **【Related】** Korea's survey North's railways in hopes of joining networks
- **【Related】** North Korea criticizes US for seeking UN meeting on rights

Ban, a former South Korean foreign minister, said "this is the time" to achieve North Korea's denuclearization after nearly a quarter century of unsuccessful efforts, and that the North and the world should not lose this opportunity.

"I'd like to really advise the North Korean leader that the world is ready" to help his country, Ban told The Associated Press, specifically citing South Korea, the U.S., China, Japan and Russia. He said denuclearization is important for a better future for the two Koreas, including reconciliation and reunification.

"I hope this is the time, please do not lose this opportunity," he said.

Kim sharply raised tensions with nuclear and missile tests last year, but suddenly reached out to South Korea and the United States this year with a vague nuclear disarmament pledge.

North Korea is seeking security guarantees from the U.S. and relief from international sanctions.

U.S. President Donald Trump and South Korean President Moon Jae-in say tensions have eased significantly since then, but Ban, who is in Tokyo for a World Bank event, said the crisis is not over and that North Korea should fully disclose its nuclear weapons inventory to a trusted international organization such as the International Atomic Energy Agency.

"The crisis is still continuing because of North Korea's development of nuclear, missile and weapons program and materials. It is North Korea which should clearly state and show by taking actions, then I am sure that there will be no reason why the Security Council of the United Nations will continue to impose the sanction on North Korea," Ban said.

South Korea's Moon has facilitated a series of high-level talks between the U.S. and North Korea, including a summit between Trump and Kim in June, and has met Kim three times this year. After their third meeting in North Korea's capital of Pyongyang in September, Moon said Kim agreed to make a reciprocal

visit to Seoul this year. If that happens, he would be the first North Korean leader to do so since the end of the 1950-1953 Korean War, though the plan is still unclear.

Trump recently said he is likely to hold a second summit with Kim in January or February. Ban said he hopes their second summit will occur at a time when the international community feels confident about North Korea's commitment to denuclearization.

Japanese anti-nuke resolution adopted by UN

December 6, 2018

U.N. adopts Japan's anti-nuke resolution but U.S. abstains

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2018/12/06/national/politics-diplomacy/u-n-adopts-japans-anti-nuke-resolution-u-s-abstains/#.XAjL8TFCeos>

Kyodo

NEW YORK – The U.N. General Assembly endorsed a Japanese anti-nuclear resolution by a wide margin on Wednesday, but the United States abstained in a shift of position from the previous year.

The U.N. organ also adopted an Austria-led resolution calling on member countries to ratify a landmark treaty banning nuclear weapons at an early date, the first approval of the motion this year. The ban treaty was first adopted last summer.

Tokyo has penned and put forward a similar motion calling for the abolition of nuclear weapons in each of the past 25 years, with the latest version endorsed by 162 states. Four countries — China, North Korea, Russia and Syria — voted against it and 23 abstained.

Among other things, the text “renews the determination of all states to take united action toward the total elimination of nuclear weapons through the easing of international tension and the strengthening of trust between states.”

This year's resolution, amended from last year's text that departed from what many came to regard as standard language, gained a slightly higher level of support, with six more countries backing it and one less abstention.

The U.S. abstention came despite Japan again omitting any reference to the nuclear weapons ban treaty in light of its reliance on U.S. nuclear deterrence. Washington backed the resolution last year.

This year, France also abstained while Britain was the only permanent member of the U.N. Security Council to endorse it.

Some of the other abstentions came from countries that support the ban treaty, such as Austria, Brazil, Mexico and South Africa.

When the motion was adopted by a U.N. committee last month, Robert Wood, the U.S. ambassador on disarmament, said the current language — which differs from the 2017 resolution that Washington had backed — was a “return to language that dates from a different time and a different security environment than we currently face.”

The United States has stressed that unspecified conditions must first be met to improve the international security environment before disarmament can take place, a view that stands in opposition to those of many countries.

Japan, the sole country to have been attacked with nuclear weapons, tried in this year’s document to bridge the gaps, reviving past references to consensus agreements reached at the review conferences on the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty in 1995, 2000 and 2010.

As for the Austria-led motion urging early ratification of the nuclear ban pact, all five permanent U.N. Security Council members — Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States, all of which possess nuclear arms — opposed it along with Japan and other nuclear-umbrella nations.

The first-time resolution was endorsed by 126 nations. Forty-one countries voted against it and 16 abstained.

The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, adopted in July 2017, has so far been signed by 69 nations and ratified by 19. It requires ratification by 50 countries before it can enter into force.

The one-page motion welcomes the treaty’s adoption and the ongoing process toward putting it into effect, which kicked off in September last year.

It also encourages countries that have not signed or ratified the pact to do so, as well as to promote adherence to the treaty in bilateral, regional and multilateral forums.

Ron & Yasu

December 20, 2018

Yasuhiro Nakasone persuaded Ronald Reagan to push for taking all intermediate-range nukes out of Asia, records show

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2018/12/20/national/politics-diplomacy/records-reveal-yasuhiro-nakasone-persuaded-ronald-reagan-push-total-inf-elimination-1980s/#.XBuNAGlCeos>

Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone effectively persuaded U.S. President Ronald Reagan in the 1980s to aim for the total elimination of intermediate-range nuclear forces in Asia, instead of an initially proposed 50 percent cut in Soviet forces, according to Japanese diplomatic records released Wednesday.

The United States and the Soviet Union eventually agreed in 1987 on the worldwide abolition of INF.

One focus of U.S.-Soviet nuclear disarmament negotiations was the geographical areas for INF elimination.

On Jan. 15, 1986, Mikhail Gorbachev, general secretary of the Soviet Communist Party's Central Committee, put forward a new proposal for nuclear disarmament, to which the United States sent a reply late the next month.

In a letter Reagan wrote to Nakasone dated Feb. 6, before he sent his reply to Gorbachev, the U.S. president noted that the Soviet Union was reluctant to agree immediately to the total removal of INF on a global scale. Reagan said he was inclined to propose to Moscow that the Soviet Union start by reducing SS20 intermediate-range missiles in Asia by at least 50 percent.

With Reagan suggesting that he would prioritize the elimination of INF in Europe, Nakasone said in a letter dated Feb. 10 that careful thought was needed on the idea of zero for Europe and 50 percent for Asia, according to the diplomatic records.

The plan would create a realistic danger of impediments to the U.S. security strategy for the Northern Pacific, Nakasone wrote.

The prime minister also told Reagan that Japanese Ambassador to the United States Nobuo Matsunaga would explain the issues with the proposal for a 50 percent cut.

In an instruction to Matsunaga also dated Feb. 10, Nakasone said the U.S. proposal strikingly lacked balance with Europe.

In a letter to Nakasone dated Feb. 22, Reagan said he was paying attention to the prime minister's special concerns. Reagan withdrew the initial proposal, and expressed his intention to present a proposal to the Soviet Union that could result in the total elimination of INF in both Europe and Asia by the end of 1989.

Nakasone immediately sent a letter to Reagan the same day saying he was grateful that the president had paid sufficient consideration to Japan's proposal. The revelation suggests that Nakasone made use of his strong personal relationship with Reagan. The leaders called each other "Ron" and "Yasu."

In December 1987, Reagan and Gorbachev signed the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty in Washington.

The diplomatic records were among 22 sets of files covering the years through to the late 1980s that were declassified by the Foreign Ministry on Wednesday.

In principle, the ministry declassifies diplomatic files 30 years after their creation. The documents can be accessed at the Diplomatic Archives in Tokyo.

ICAN nuclear ban treaty

January 1, 2019

ICAN: Nuclear ban treaty will take effect in 2019

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20190102_01/

The founding chair of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons predicts that a treaty banning nuclear arms will go into effect this year.

The UN adopted the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in 2017. The pact will need to be ratified by 50 members before it can take effect. Nineteen countries had already gone through that process by the end of 2018.

ICAN co-founder Tilman Ruff told NHK that 69 countries and territories have signed the pact, and are moving towards ratification.

The Nobel Peace prize-winning group has also launched a campaign to seek support from cities in nations that have not signed the treaty.

Ruff says the pact is becoming even more important and urgent because the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty between the United States and Russia is under threat.

US President Donald Trump announced last year that Washington will pull out of the nuclear missile treaty with Russia.

New trend? No loans to makers of inhuman weapons

Janvier 15, 2018

Editorial: Public, private sectors should work together for abolition of nuclear weapons

<https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20190115/p2a/00m/0na/009000c>

The number of financial institutions prohibiting transactions with companies related to nuclear weapons is slowly on the rise in a global trend that could lead to the abolition of such arms.

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According to a survey conducted by the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons and the Dutch nongovernment organization PAX, 63 financial institutions, mostly in Europe and the United States had completely or partially banned lending to manufacturers of nuclear weapons as of October 2017.

In Japan last year, Resona Holdings, Inc. announced its policy of prohibiting such loans. It was said to be the first instance of a major bank in the country banning all lending to companies involved in manufacturing nuclear arms, although other financial institutions had stopped lending specifically for the making of such weapons.

Those financial institutions, including Resona, were able to take the measure partly because they did not have outstanding lending to those nuclear weapons companies. Many companies with military businesses have the mainstay of their operations in the civilian sector, and halting loans to such firms is not easy for many lenders.

Yet it is meaningful for financial institutions to assume a leadership role and take a tough stance against the production of inhuman weapons. Such a posture indicates a norm that even private corporations should take responsibility toward the abolition of nuclear weapons.

A notable change is happening following the adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons at the United Nations in 2017. The number of institutions banning loans to nuclear weapons companies jumped by nine in 2017 from 54 in 2016 and 53 in 2015.

The treaty bans the development and manufacturing of nuclear weapons as well as extending support for such programs. This prohibition is said to have the potential to cover lending from financial institutions. Companies prohibiting lending to nuclear weapons manufacturers may be trying to avert this risk and improve their corporate image before the treaty takes effect.

It is no surprise that an increasing number of financial institutions are following up on the expanding international trend of adopting an investment principle of not extending loans to makers of inhuman weapons.

The Japanese government should not overlook this trend, and push for the abolition of nuclear weapons.

In December last year, a Japan-sponsored resolution seeking the abolition of nuclear weapons was passed by the U.N. General Assembly for the 25th year in a row. The United States, however, abstained because Washington did not like the resolution's emphasis on disarmament obligations, although the country was a co-sponsor of the Japanese resolution in 2017.

Meanwhile, many countries supporting the nuclear weapons ban treaty also abstained because the resolution, like in 2017, lacked reference to the treaty. And the treaty itself has garnered only 19 countries and regions that have ratified the international pact -- far less than the 50 needed for the treaty to take effect.

As the U.S. and Russia beef up their nuclear weapons strategies, threatening a reversal from moves toward nuclear abolition, stemming the flow needs the joint efforts of the public and private sectors.

What's to happen to the nuclear arms treaty?

January 16, 2019

Nuclear arms treaty faces collapse after failed Russia-U.S. talks

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2019/01/16/world/nuclear-arms-treaty-faces-collapse-failed-russia-u-s-talks/#.XD8lyGlCeos>

AFP-JIJI

GENEVA - The survival of a key nuclear arms control treaty was cast further in doubt Tuesday after **the U.S. and Russia blamed each other for pushing the agreement to the brink of collapse.**

Senior diplomats from both countries met in Geneva amid widespread concern over the fate of the bilateral Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, which successfully put an end to a mini-arms race after it was signed in 1987.

U.S. President Donald Trump said in October that his country would pull out of the deal unless Russia stops violating it.

Russian President Vladimir Putin has threatened to develop nuclear missiles banned under the treaty if it is scrapped.

"The meeting was disappointing as it is clear Russia continues to be in material breach of the treaty and did not come prepared to explain how it plans to return to full and verifiable compliance," U.S. Under Secretary for Arms Control and International Security, Andrea Thompson, said in a statement.

"Our message was clear: Russia must destroy its noncompliant missile system," she said.

Thompson will be in Brussels on Wednesday, where she plans to brief NATO allies on the INF talks.

Russia hosted the negotiations at its mission in Geneva and Moscow's delegation was led by deputy foreign minister Sergei Ryabkov.

Ryabkov said that if the deal is ditched, "responsibility for this fully and completely rests with the American side," according to quotes published by Russian news agencies after the talks.

He added that said the parties had failed to agree on anything and Washington did not appear to be in the mood for more negotiations.

“We are forced to acknowledge that there is no movement forward,” Ryabkov was quoted as saying.

“We are ready for dialogue on the basis of equality, mutual respect, (and) without putting forward ultimatums.”

Last month, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said Washington would withdraw within 60 days from the Cold War treaty limiting mid-range nuclear arms if Russia does not dismantle missiles that the U.S. claims breach the deal, which include Russia’s 9M729 system, also known by the designation SSC-8.

The INF was a bilateral treaty between the U.S. and the then Soviet Union, so it puts no restrictions on other major military actors like China.

Pompeo has also said the U.S. was not prepared to cede this advantage to a rival and noted that American concerns about Russian compliance pre-date the Trump administration.

Washington’s top diplomat has accused Russia of shrugging off dozens of warnings from senior U.S. officials over the past five years about the SSC-8.

Ryabkov said Tuesday’s talks in Geneva centered on SSC-8 system but that U.S. demands regarding the missile were unacceptable.

The landmark treaty was signed by Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev and led to nearly 2,700 short- and medium-range missiles being eliminated.

NATO chief Jens Stoltenberg has described the INF as “arms control at its best” but warned last month that the collapse of the agreement appeared likely.

American withdrawal from INF worries Japan

February 4, 2019

US-Russia suspension of nuke treaty worries Japan; China wants to keep midrange missiles

<https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20190204/p2a/00m/0na/029000c>

TOKYO/BEIJING -- The recent decision by the United States to withdraw from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) treaty, and a corresponding move by Russia, are raising security concerns in East Asia, where Japan, a long-time ally of the U.S., faces off against China and North Korea.

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Japanese Foreign Minister Taro Kono told reporters that although Tokyo understands Washington's concerns about Russia's alleged violation of the INF pact, "a situation in which the treaty has to end is not desirable for the world." Kono added at the Feb. 1 press conference in Tokyo that Japan would like to contribute to the formation of a disarmament framework "through steady exchanges with not only the U.S. and Russia but also other relevant countries including China."

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo announced on Feb. 2 that his country suspended the implementation of obligations under the INF treaty and officially notified Moscow of the move. Pompeo said the treaty will terminate if Russia does not return in six months to "full and verifiable compliance with the treaty" by eliminating missiles Washington and NATO countries see as violating the agreement.

The 1987 pact between the U.S. and the Soviet Union, Russia's predecessor nation, eliminated all missiles with a range between 500 and 5,500 kilometers capable of carrying nuclear warheads, and has been seen as a symbol of nuclear disarmament efforts by the two major powers. The U.S. thinks that the 9M729 land-based cruise missile developed and deployed by Russia violates the accord. Russia, however, denies the allegation. In response to Pompeo's announcement, Russian President Vladimir Putin said Moscow is suspending treaty obligations as well.

For Japan, which depends substantially on the U.S. for its national security, Washington's withdrawal from the treaty is not something it can criticize directly. As North Korea refuses to denuclearize and China continues its military expansion, Japan has no choice but to rely on the strengthening of nuclear deterrent measures pursued by Washington.

Meanwhile, if the relationship between the U.S. and Russia deteriorates further, territorial and peace treaty negotiations between Japan and Russia "can be adversely affected," says an individual close to the Japanese government.

A senior Foreign Ministry official says that Japan "has to depend on the U.S. nuclear deterrence, but going against disarmament is a problem." Japanese officials hope for the creation of a "new framework" of nuclear disarmament pursued by the U.S., Russia and China -- an idea U.S. President Donald Trump mentioned in a tweet in early December last year. But at this point, there are no prospects that Beijing will take part in such an arrangement.

--- China against new missile treaty

The U.S. withdrawal from the INF may trigger new conflicts between Washington and Beijing. Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Geng Shuang issued a statement against the American move. "China is opposed to the U.S. withdrawal and urges the U.S. and Russia to properly resolve differences through constructive dialogue," he said.

For China, missiles are indispensable weapons to counter the United States. The country is on guard against potential American moves such as expanding the INF treaty to include other nations, or increasing military pressure on China by developing new types of missiles.

"China opposes the multilateralization of this (INF) treaty. What is imperative at the moment is to uphold and implement the existing treaty instead of creating a new one," Geng said in the Feb. 2 statement.

About 90 percent of China's missiles are said to have intermediate ranges as the country is not party to the INF treaty. Washington cites not only Russia but also China as a factor behind its decision to withdraw from the pact, but China has dismissed such an argument as a "mistake," arguing that the country's security policy is defensive and does not pose any threat to other countries.

China's missile forces are a pillar of its national security strategy aimed at removing the influence of U.S. forces in the Asia-Pacific region. With the U.S. maintaining the military upper hand, China places importance on a variety of cruise and ballistic missiles capable of hitting American aircraft carriers or military bases in Guam in the western Pacific and Japan. The weapons are a means to prevent American forces from intervening in issues related to Taiwan, which China sees as a renegade province, or the South China Sea, which Beijing regards as being within its sphere of influence.

The U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) described in its latest China Military Power report released on Jan. 15 that the Taiwan issue is the "primary driver for China's military modernization." The intelligence gathering and analysis arm of the U.S. Defense Department also pointed out in the report that China is promoting the development and deployment of new types of missiles including those designed to attack enemy aircraft carriers, with the U.S. in mind.

On Jan. 23, China Central Television aired footage deemed as showing the test launch of the latest DF26 intermediate-range missile. The missile, with a maximum range of at least 4,000 kilometers, can hit U.S. bases in Guam from the Chinese mainland and is thus called a "Guam killer." China's English-language newspaper Global Times quoted an expert as stating that the DF26 missile can hit moving aircraft carriers with precision using a special warhead. The reports are believed to be intended to restrain the U.S. by emphasizing the performance of the latest weapon.

(Japanese original by Muneyoshi Mitsuta, Political News Department, and Keisuke Kawazu, Beijing Bureau)

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